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Halifax

THE GIBRALTAR OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA

WRITTEN BY ROLAND BELFORT. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

THIS famous stronghold, the capital of Nova Scotia, and Britain's principal naval station in the Western Hemisphere, occupies a commanding position on the shores of a noble harbour, spacious, completely sheltered, easy of access, summer and winter. Both city and

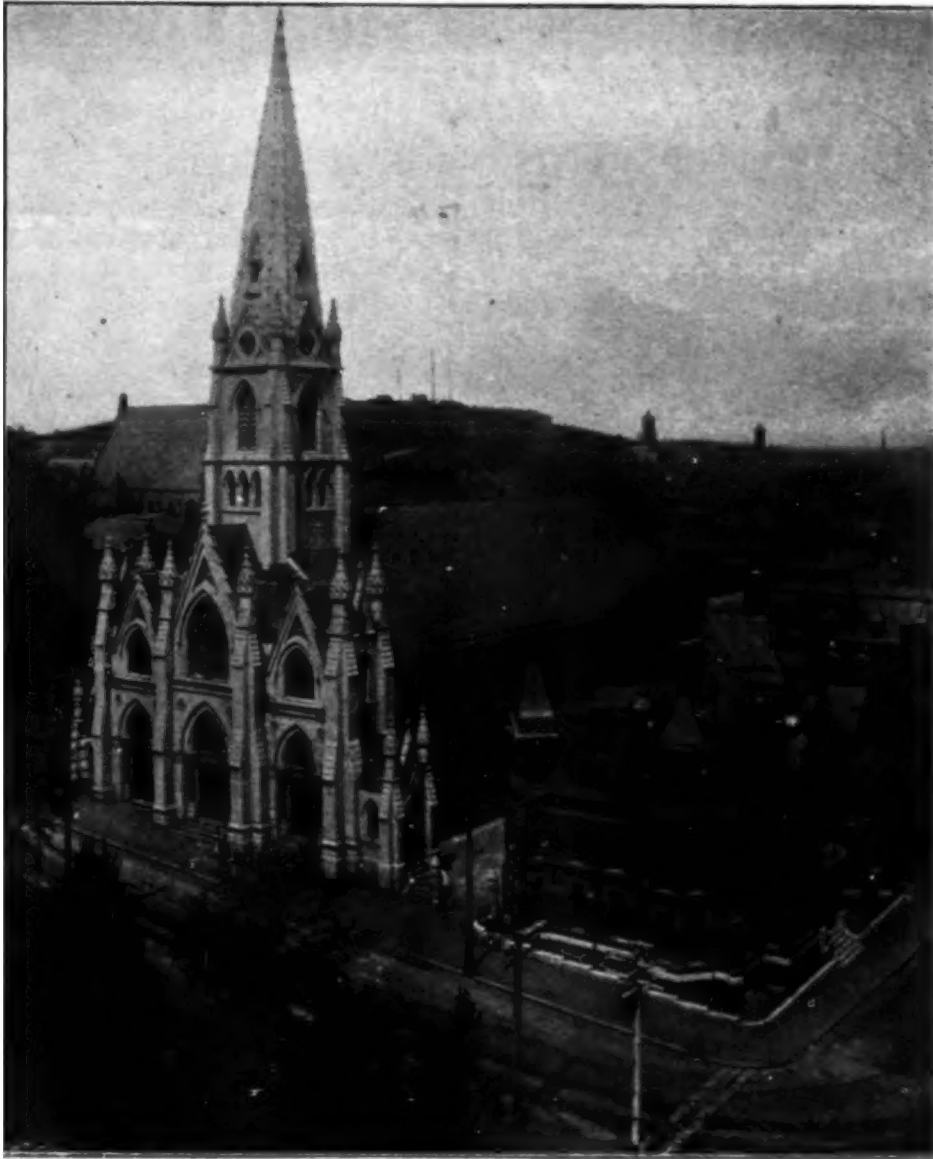
on the right, while in mid-channel are the fortified islands of St. George and Nacnab, provided with powerful armaments and all the latest warlike engines known to science. The British flag proudly floats over the old Citadel which, standing 250 feet above the sea level, crowns the summit of the hill on and around which the city is built.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, HALIFAX

harbour are so well protected by numerous powerful fortresses, established at important strategic points, that experts pronounce Halifax to be practically impregnable from the sea. Passing Devil's Island lighthouse, our transatlantic liner slowly steams up the harbour towards the city. York Redoubt and Fort Ogilvie are on the left, Fort Clarence

Riding peacefully at anchor are a number of war ships and merchant vessels, while the harbour front is occupied by docks and wharves crowded with ships flying the flags of all nations. A railway bridge spans the harbour at a point called the Narrows. Beyond this bridge the harbour widens, until it develops into Bedford Basin, a picturesque lake,



ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL AND GLEBE HOUSE

surrounded by lofty, pine-clad hills and affording ten square miles of secure anchorage. Directly opposite Halifax is Dartmouth, a small town built at the base of a range of verdant, well-wooded hills. Nestling here and there along the Dartmouth shore are pretty villas belonging to Halifax merchants. A prominent landmark is Mount Hope Asylum, an imposing castellated building which dominates the harbour. The two towns are connected by a steam ferry on the American plan.

Halifax was colonised in 1748 by emigrants from Britain and loyalists exiled from America after the Revolutionary War. Although the population

of these are solid in construction and elegant in design. Among the notable public buildings are Government House, the official residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, who is also Commander of the Forces, St. Mary's Cathedral, and Parliament Building, comprising halls for the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council, and a valuable library. Then there is the handsome Provincial Building, which accommodates the Post Office and the Provincial Museum, in which is exhibited a gilt pyramid representing the amount of gold produced in Nova Scotia between 1862 and 1870 — £674,680. Around this building is held the weekly

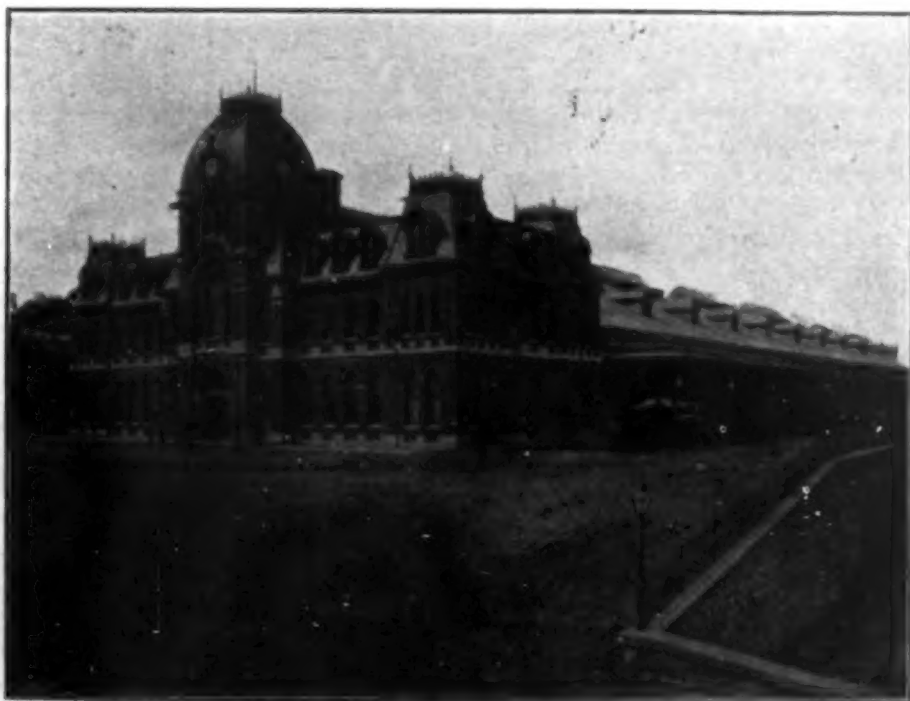
is under 50,000, the city covers an extensive area. The streets mostly run parallel with the harbour, or at right angles down the slope from the Citadel. The older and more central streets constitute "The City," the South End is the fashionable quarter, the North End is the populous district, the regions lying west of the Citadel being distinctly suburban in their general aspect. Hollis, Water, Barrington, and Granville Streets are the busiest thoroughfares, and contain many handsome hotels, wholesale warehouses, banks, and shops. Most

market, attended by a picturesque crowd of country people, fishermen, and Micmac Indians, for a few of the latter are still found in Nova Scotia. The Halifax Club occupies a massive brown stone building. Other architectural monuments are the City Hall, the Blind Asylum, the City Hospital, and the stately Convent of the Sacred Heart, which overlooks the pretty Public Gardens.

The city, which is extremely healthy, is well governed by a Mayor and Council of Aldermen. It is lighted throughout by electricity, and copiously supplied with pure water from lakes lying so high above Halifax that the water is forced over the loftiest houses by natural pressure. There is an efficient fire-alarm telegraph, a smart, well-equipped volunteer fire brigade, and a good tramway. The city is a centre of religious and social activity, and all denominations are adequately represented. Naturally, officers, soldiers, and sailors are always *en evidence*, making Halifax resemble Portsmouth. An extensive trade is carried on with the Mother Country, the United States, and the West Indies, as well as with Newfound-

land, and every outlying port along the coast.

In and around the Citadel are centred the various military establishments constituting the Halifax garrison. The Citadel works were commenced by the Queen's father, the Duke of Kent, who was then Commander of the Forces. He employed a large number of maroons — prisoners of war. Endless changes and additions have resulted in the present formidable stronghold. The massive walls defy assault, the extensive barracks within are bomb-proof, formidable guns sweep city and harbour. The dockyard, which occupies half-a-mile of the shore of the upper harbour, employs a large staff, and comprises docks, arsenal, hospital, storehouses, and all the adjuncts of a first-class naval establishment. In the vicinity is the Admiral's official residence. Here also stand Wellington Barracks and Halifax Railway Station. During our wars with the French and the Americans Halifax was the base of naval and military operations. Many warlike trophies were formerly exhibited here, the figure-head of the *Chesapeake*, for instance. These invidious emblems



RAILWAY STATION



HALIFAX, LOOKING S.E. FROM CITADEL

of strife were, however, removed some time ago.

Halifax abounds in charming "bits" of scenery. The view from Citadel Hill is really superb. Here one can dominate the entire city, look straight down on the decks of the ships at anchor and embrace the verdant Dartmouth shores, the blue, landlocked bay, the fortified islands and the glistening waters of Bedford Basin. Behind the Citadel stretch extensive green plains, dotted with white cottages and bounded by undulating hills whose contours are clearly defined against a cloudless sky. To the south lies the vast expanse of ocean, its heaving, swelling waters shimmering in the sun.

At the mouth of the harbour, and about a mile from the Citadel, stands Point Pleasant Park. Fifteen hundred acres in extent, it possesses a distinct charm resulting from its bold and picturesque site, its shady, flower-decked avenues, and its wealth of pine, evergreen, maple, and other hardy trees. It is studded with invisible, heavily-armed forts, capable of hurling forth death-dealing shot and shell. Caught between a heavy cross-fire from here and from Macnab's Island, no ship could escape destruction. The Park is skirted

by the North-West Arm, a river-like inlet which, flowing from the sea, ascends to within two miles of Bedford Basin. The Arm is a favourite spot for picnics, bathing and boating in summer, and skating in winter. Its banks are studded with charming villas belonging to the more opulent Halifax merchants.

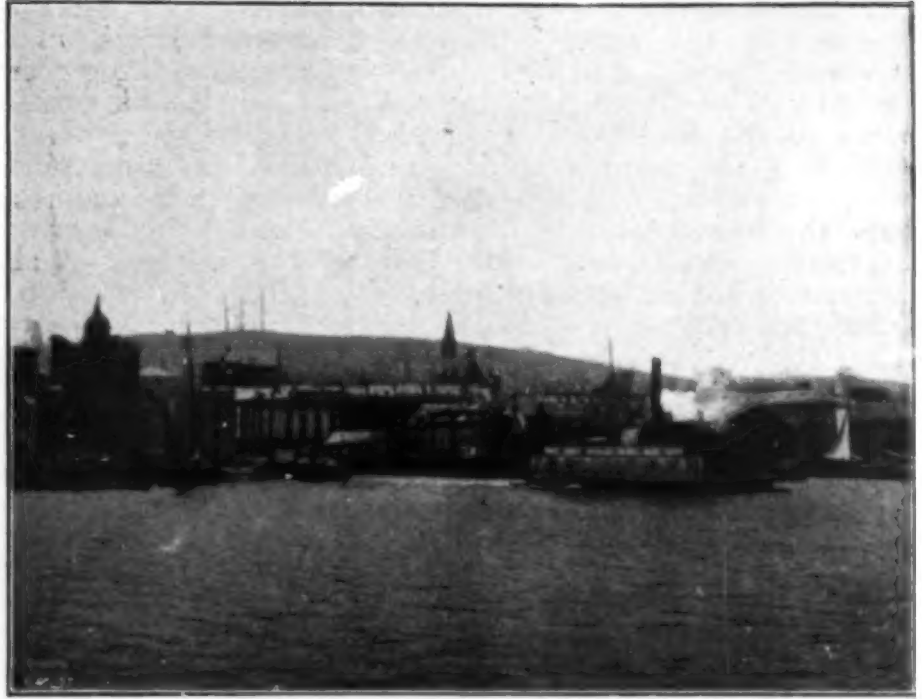
Halifax is rich in historical associations. Here was elaborated that fateful proclamation by which the Acadians were banished from the "Land of Evangeline" immortalised by Longfellow. Along the shores of Bedford Basin were established the mournful camps and hospitals of the French Armada despatched in 1746, "to conquer the North American coast from Newfoundland to Virginia." Alas! this ambitious design was cruelly frustrated. The fleet was dispersed by several terrible storms, only two men-of-war and a few transports reaching Halifax. The Admiral, Duc d'Anville, died of apoplexy, induced by grief at his disastrous failure. His successor, Vice-admiral d'Estournelle, committed suicide shortly afterwards. A thousand French soldiers died from scurvy and other diseases, the barracks were transformed into hospitals and the shores of Bedford Basin into one vast cemetery. Finally, another fleet was mobilised and

ordered to attack Annapolis Royal. But a terrible hurricane arose near Cape Sable, scattering the fleet. Many ships perished and the survivors quit-
ted American waters. Up this harbour, in 1813, sailed the British frigate *Shannon*, proudly towing the American frigate *Chesapeake*, captured after a terrible twenty minutes struggle, in which the English conquered, by sheer bull-

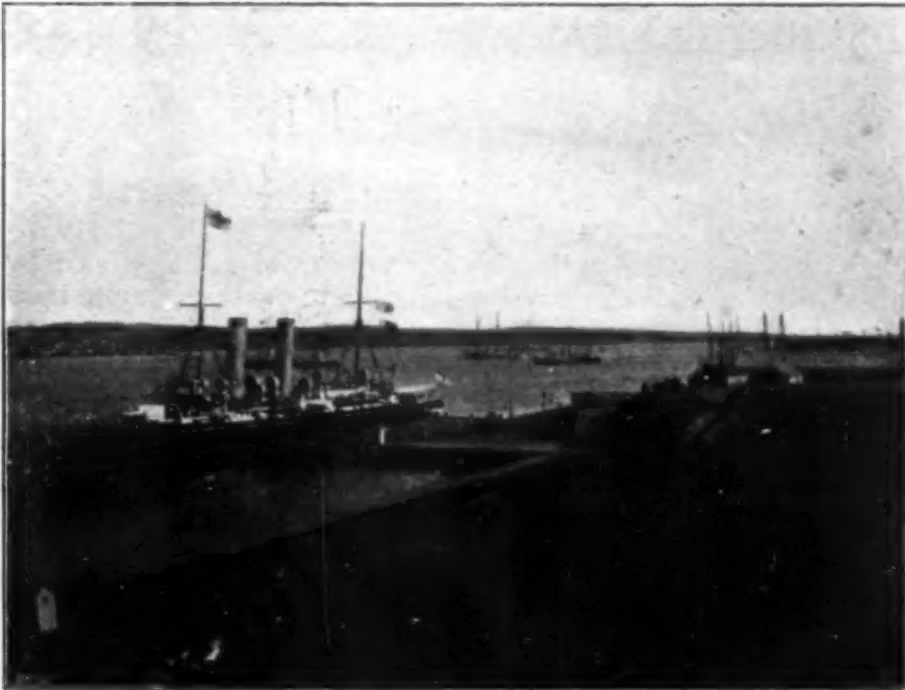
dog pluck, the finest crew the Yankees ever mustered. Sir Provo Wallis, who assisted at this famous victory, Sir Fenwick Williams, the hero of Kars, Sir John Inglis, the defender of Lucknow, Welsford and Parker, whose heroism during

the Crimean War is commemorated by a fine monument erected opposite St. Mary's Cathedral, Samuel Cunard, founder of the Cunard Steamship Company, and Sir Charles Tupper, are celebrities of whom Nova Scotians are justly proud.

The climate is subject to sudden variations. Fog and rain are not infrequent. From November to April the winter is arctic in its severity. The lakes, rivers and roads are frozen; so, indeed, are many of the inhabitants' ears and noses. Hence the Nova Scotian cognomen, "Blue-nose." For months the country is enveloped in an intermittent snowy mantle,



THE HALIFAX-DARTMOUTH FERRY BOAT LEAVING HALIFAX



DOCKYARD WITH WARSHIPS

and ice blizzards are not unknown. Skating in the streets becomes a possibility, while walking without a barbed stick or "creepers"—steel spikes fitted to the boot-heels—is extremely difficult. The summer is not much warmer than our English summer. Perhaps the most enjoyable months are September and October—the Indian summer—when the days are bright and balmy, the evenings cool and fragrant. Then the heights of Dartmouth and Bedford Basin are ablaze with golden foliage, and glorious sunsets illuminate

in American cities is not observable here, where business and pleasure receive due attention. Progressive Haligonians complain that the preponderating influence wielded by the naval and military authorities has hitherto deadened the energies of the citizens, who are, moreover, constitutionally cautious and conservative. The men are sturdy, hard-working, hard-headed fellows, as ardent in sport as they are keen in business. They make the money, and their wives do the rest. The ladies are lively, handsome creatures, who keep in the van of fashion. With



CITY HALL

the surface of the waters and invest the landscape with a ruddier glow.

Halifax has several well-edited daily and weekly journals, one being devoted to "Society." For, as New York boasts its "400," so Halifax rejoices in its "300," select, exclusive, prone to the practice of protective ostracism. But the Haligonians are mainly hearty, good-natured people, with generous ideas about hospitality. In tone, mode of thought, manner and habits, they are distinctly English, even the street names: Buckingham, Grafton, Albemarle, Wellington, Granville, remind one of fashionable London. The feverish activity prevailing

their lithe, robust forms developed by constant outdoor exercise, and their delicious pink and white complexions maintained by the variable climate, they make their pale, nervous American cousins feel quite "mad." They indulge in every form of sport with a cheerful conviction and a tireless energy that captivate the military and naval officers, who regard Halifax as an ideal station. The young matrons are as ardent in the pursuit of pleasure as the sweet girl bachelors, thanks to a social system which enables them to devolute domestic duties to other hands. In the summer they indulge in bicycling,

HALIFAX



PARLIAMENT BUILDING, HALIFAX



VIEW OF HALIFAX



HOLLIS STREET, HALIFAX



MARKET DAY IN HALIFAX

yachting, regattas—Halifax was always famous for its rowing men—picnics, tennis parties and informal dances. In the winter there are skating and sleighing parties, ice carnivals, masked balls, theatre parties, and concerts. The military and naval balls are the great events of the season. Even Prince George, who spent some time here, was astonished at the Haligonians' capacity for pleasure. Nevertheless, the officer who marries a Nova Scotian maiden usually finds that she develops into a domestic treasure. He appreciates her as he does the goodly Canadian dollars amassed by a prudent papa, and sacrificed by an ambitious mamma, anxious to see her daughter enter a higher social sphere.

The future of Halifax is decidedly promising, and everything points to its becoming of vast commercial and political, as well as naval, importance. The imperial route to the East may now

be considered as definitely established. Halifax thus becomes the Atlantic terminus for fast steamers to connect, by means of trans-continental trains, with those already running across the Pacific. Halifax will shortly be an important telegraphic centre, with lines radiating to Britain, Bermuda, the West Indies, and across Canada, and ultimately across the Pacific to Australia. Finally the magnificent position and extensive area of the city, its noble harbour and splendid water frontage, its proximity to England (2,300 miles), its railway and telegraphic facilities to all parts of the American continent—all these advantages entitle Halifax to take rank as the New York of Canada—the principal eastern port of entry and exit for men and merchandise, besides forming an important intermediate station on the Queen's highway to Australia and the Far East.



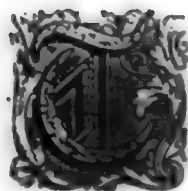
POST OFFICE

The Master Criminal

WRITTEN BY FRED. M. WHITE. ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL HARDY

XII.—GENERAL MARCOS

CHAPTER I.



HE Cretan ferment was at its height. Daily did the *Chronicle* fume and fret, and call upon England to do something. And yet business proceeded as usual, for level-headed men refused to "enthuse" over gallant Greece in her attempt to obtain immortality and Crete at one and the same time.

Still, there were not wanting thousands of people ready to find both money and sympathy for the cause of liberty. And when the Athens correspondent of the *Chronicle* announced that General Marcos was on his way to England, a gentle thrill of excitement swayed the pulses of the humanitarians.

Marcos' mission was twofold. In the first place, he desired to make clear the Hellenic side of the question, and collect subscriptions for the good cause at the same time. For, beyond all question, the descendants of those famous warriors were very hard up indeed. And Marcos, who had a fine histrionic talent, and some little knowledge of war, hoped to clear some thousands of pounds by the expedition.

It was rather unfortunate that neither the *Star* nor *Chronicle* could supply their readers with the photograph of the illustrious warrior who had so suddenly

flashed out of nothingness into the concrete form of a celebrity. An urgent wire to Athens was despatched, asking that the void should be filled.

Meanwhile an astute brain was doing its best to supply the deficiency. There was here the material for an adventure, and an opening for ultimate income after Gryde's own heart. He had come along in the hope of something turning up in the near East, and it looked as if he were not to be disappointed.

The newspaper man was up country—at the residence of General Marcos, in fact—when the demand for the photograph came. The American war correspondent, Horace Melville, also formed one of the party. To clear the situation, it would be as well to state that Melville and Gryde were one and the same person. The newspaper man had taken quite a fancy to the jocund American.

"By Jove! I never thought about the photograph," he said. "Marcos is sure to have one. But how to get it to Athens? I can't possibly leave here for a day or two, and then I am going down to the coast when the General's departed."

"I'll go," Melville said promptly. "It's a bit of a risk over those hills alone, but I daresay I shall manage to get through, I've been in Greece so many times."

The disciple of the journalistic-hysterical thanked Melville warmly. Just now his hands were very full indeed, coaching Marcos, whose English was only fair, and further down the coast some English marines had been stealing cockles, or some other blazing atrocity.

"You are very good," he said, "and I accept your offer. Perhaps you wouldn't mind posting a batch of copy

for me as well. I'll put the photo inside."

Gryde promised to do as desired. It would be a week later, he heard, before Marcos passed by the same road that he was taking to the coast. Then the messenger rode off as if all the furies were pressing close behind him. Not that he proceeded straight to Athens with his native servant; he had a little business to do first. He turned out of



"LULI GAVE YOU MY MESSAGE, OF COURSE," SAID GRYDE

the beaten track, and rode far into the hills till night began to fall.

The place where Gryde and his servant Luli pulled rein at length was wild and deserted. High above them towered a range of mountains, fir-covered almost to the summit. There was no sign of life anywhere.

"If this is the spot," said Gryde, "you can give the signal, Luli."

The murderous-looking and none too cleanly Greek placed his fingers to his lips and three times emitted a peculiar whistling scream. Presently there came an answering reply. Two men dropped hand over hand, apparently from the heights, and in a short space of time stood before Gryde and his companion, Nicholi bowed, with the air of one who appreciates his worth. He had the reputation of being the most daring brigand on the peninsula.

"Luli gave you my message, of course," said Gryde. "You know what to do?"

Nicholi nodded, and pulled draughtily at his cigarette.

"Oh, yes," he responded. "I am to make myself master of the General. Also I am to detain him here until I hear from you again; also you are to pay me——"

"Five hundred pounds in good English gold," said Gryde. "Here are the sovereigns. As to the rest, Marcos passes this way on Tuesday. He will have one servant only."

"And my band number seven," Nicholi said, with a smile. "If I remember, your Excellency was to provide me with a pair of American revolvers."

"I have brought them. You fully understand me? The thing is quite simple and easy. As to the rest, Luli will let you hear. I can stay with you no longer; in fact, I must be in Athens by daylight."

When finally Gryde did arrive in Athens, it was alone, for he had rid himself of Luli. And, moreover, he was disguised beyond recognition. He wore the undress uniform of a Greek general, and he looked the character to the life. There was no need to ask any questions, because Gryde knew Athens perfectly well.

Once Gryde had thoroughly rested himself and partaken of food, he proceeded to the modern part of the city, and there entered a photographer's establishment. Needless to say the proprietor was an Englishman, nothing of an up-to-date character like that could have appealed to the Greek native. And there were always plenty of tourists there.

The proprietor received Gryde in person, and asked his requirements.

"Well," Gryde responded, "I want my photograph taken. One good cabinet will be sufficient, and I shall require it to-morrow afternoon, properly mounted. I know I am asking a great deal, but I am prepared to pay for the accommodation."

The photographer demurred a little, and finally agreed, as Gryde knew quite well he would. These were the little things that money always procures. The first attempt proved quite successful, and Gryde left the shop with the assurance that the mounted print would be ready for him on the following afternoon.

He was perfectly satisfied with the same when he got it. So far everything had proceeded with the greatest smoothness. Gryde had embarked in more promising ventures, so far as their pecuniary side were concerned, but he could recall nothing that pleased him better than the present undertaking, there was such an element of adventure about it.

Gryde smiled as he laid the portrait on the table of his sitting-room. Then he produced the bulky envelope he had promised to forward to the *Chronicle* office. A little hot water released the flap, and Gryde proceeded to exchange the two photographs, substituting his own for the original, which he carefully destroyed.

"The thing looks like a success," he muttered, "nobody will know but what Marcos is in England; indeed, will they not see his name in the papers? Who would dream that he was close to his own house all the time? And Nicholi will hold him safe, or forfeit the other half of his money. I've only to wait till Tuesday and then——"

Tuesday came in due course, and towards nightfall Gryde strolled out of the city. At a place where the road was



"BENEATH HE FOUND A PIECE OF DIRTY FOLDED PAPER"

deserted he paused before a flat stone lying in the rank grass and flowers. Gryde raised this.

Beneath he found a piece of dirty folded paper. He opened it, and read the pencilled scrawl with more eagerness than usual.

"We have caught the bird," it ran, "and caged him. Nicholi."

Gryde gave a smile of satisfaction.

"The time has come," he said, "the time to act. Positively my last venture looks like being the most fascinating of the lot."

Twenty-four hours later Gryde was steaming towards England.

CHAPTER II.

THE portrait of General Marcos duly appeared, and for once in a way did not constitute the libel which generally follows on pictorial art in penny daily papers. A glowing biography was attached, the perusal of which caused Gryde to smile, for, sooth to say, his insight into human nature was extensive and peculiar; and, from personal knowledge of Marcos, Gryde would not have written him down either as a hero or philanthropist.

Still, there is always an opening for a lion in London, even though there may be more than a suspicion of clockwork about him, and just for the present the celebrity market was tight. Nansen was elsewhere, and there was nobody to take his place. Moreover, the Greeks had not hitherto forwarded anything like a favourable specimen; and the Cretan question really was occupying a good deal of public attention.

There were some hundreds of thousands of people who were burning with sympathy and full of natural horror of the unspeakable Turk. The morning following "Marcos'" arrival, he held quite a levée in his private room at the Métropole.

Quite a knot of prominent journalists—the kind who write "program"—were there. In their raid they had captured a Duke, a poor thing from a democratic point of view, but quite the most reliable brand in the way of a chairman. The Duke of Clifton, who was young and terribly in earnest, spent most of his

time occupying chairs. For the rest, his flagrant socialism was quite a matter of the cuticle.

"We can promise you a grand reception," said the editor of the *Telephone*; "a strong committee has been formed of which his Grace here is the chairman."

"His Grace is very kind," Gryde said solemnly.

"And we have arranged for a great demonstration in Hyde Park on Sunday!" another journalist put in eagerly. "We estimate that half a million will be present. It is very fortunate, General, that you have such a command of our tongue."

"You expect me to speak?" Gryde asked. He had overlooked this fact, and to boil up the necessary enthusiasm would be a strain.

"It will be absolutely essential," the Duke remarked; "the very thing we require. You will be able to sway your audience at will."

"And touch their pockets also," Gryde said, with a queer smile. "Shall I confess I came here for that purpose. A poor nation like Greece——"

The Duke hastened to give the desired assurances.

"We have not been idle," he said, "mass meetings are already arranged in all the great towns. Thousands will respond cheerfully to the call. On Sunday you will get an idea what England is like when her ire is roused."

For the first time since the commencement of the present adventure, Gryde began to wish that he had turned his genius in some other channel. It looked as if he was going to be profoundly bored by the whole thing. And if there was one human attribute he disliked more than another it was enthusiasm. Enthusiasm led to all kinds of troubles.

All the same, there could be no drawing back now. The great demonstration duly came off, but the half million of people were conspicuous by their absence. Round the dozen platforms a thin black line gathered, and then finally it came on a pelting storm. Gryde rejoiced from the bottom of his heart.

Nobody appeared to be pleased save the editor of the *Telephone*. He spoke of the enthusiasm and the crowd, though he was not *quite* certain that the

attendance numbered half a million. He desired to be quite fair, he had no desire to menace the Government unduly as he nobly knocked off an odd fifty thousand.

"All the same," Gryde remarked subsequently, "the thing was an absolute failure. If the North of England only turns out to be the same."

But your real journalist is nothing if not sanguine.

"Wait till you have been to Ironborough," he said.

And after Ironborough, Gryde was fain to confess that things were better than he had anticipated.

The town in question was a great Radical centre; its leading lights were men of wealth, and some six thousand people had gathered for the occasion. At the end of three hours Gryde retired to his hotel the richer by over £4,000.

This collection being so large, it was only natural that Coalville, an adjacent and small city, being a city, should desire to go one better. £6,000 odd were collected, and, in the course of a fortnight, Gryde began to feel that he was not living in vain.

An immense concourse of people were packed into the Maryport Town Hall. The Duke of Clifton occupied the chair, and the platform boasted of many a shining light besides. A month had passed, and this was the final meeting in the North, a special effort to wind up a successful tour.

Gryde sat waiting for his turn to speak. He was fairly satisfied, and utterly tired of the whole business. Nearly a hundred thousand pounds had passed into his hands, and he had quite made up his mind, once London was reached, to conveniently disappear. His thoughts were wandering away in the direction of the Southern seas, visions of rest and peace, and sunshine, floated before his eyes.

Then he aroused himself with an effort. Somebody was tugging at his coat-tails. A verbose local actor had just sat down amidst an audible but not too flattering sigh of relief, and Gryde declared that his time had come to speak.

As he lifted himself to his feet a hurricane of cheers burst forth. All he could

see was a seething sea of faces as his vision cleared and his senses grew alert. For twenty minutes Gryde was followed with rapt attention. The silence was vivid. A disturbance at the door was followed by a long and angry hiss.

Gryde paused. He could hear voices, one of which struck him as familiar. Somebody was trying to come in, and the doorkeeper seemed equally anxious to keep the intruder out. Then the dispute seemed to be ended and two people entered.

Not a muscle of Gryde's face moved, although in that instant he recognised the fact that he stood in the most deadly peril. To a certain extent he was prepared for this emergency—if only he were outside the hall.

But then he was penned in by thousands of people. Instantly Gryde's hand went behind him, and the touch of something hard in his pistol-pocket had a reassuring effect. For in those two men standing there grim and quiet in the door way Gryde recognised two enemies.

They were the Athens correspondent of the *Chronicle* and the real General Marcos!

Gryde had no occasion for any one to tell him what had happened. Either Marcos had escaped or the brigand Nicholi had betrayed him. Then these two had met, they had compared notes over fugitive English papers, and come to the logical conclusion that some one had played a daring and rascally trick upon them.

It mattered little to Gryde whom they suspected. To all practical purposes they had the daring impostor at their mercy. And meanwhile, given a few minutes' start, Gryde could have laughed at his victims. He had all his changes ready to be used the moment they were required. And in moving from town to town he had not neglected this precaution.

He spoke on quietly and steadily. Not for a fraction of a second did his iron nerve desert him. And all the time he was racking his brain for some way out. Then, with a reckless trust in his own good fortune and fertility of resource, he sat down.

By this time the enemy had pushed

their way forward to the edge of the platform. The mine was about to be exploded.

"Excuse my interruption," said the "Special," with slow incisiveness, "but I have a painful task to perform. The man who has just sat down is a swindler and impostor. The gentleman by my side is the real General Marcos."

No uproar followed the statement, it was too stupendous.

"Does anybody know the speaker?" some one asked at length.

"I know him for one," the Chairman replied; "in fact, a good many of us do. This is a serious charge made by a responsible man. What does our friend say?"

The Duke turned interrogatively to Gryde. He smiled calmly.

"Nothing whatever," he responded, "only that this is a dramatic interlude which I did not anticipate. My character is entirely in your hands. If you will permit me to retire——"

A burly figure on the platform barred the way.

"A, no ya don't," came the grim response. "This has to be settled here and now."

Gryde resumed his seat with a polite smile. The audience followed spell-bound.

"Perhaps it would be as well," suggested the Chairman, "if those gentlemen came on the platform and made their charge in a more regular manner."

The thing was done accordingly. The "Special" was first to speak.

"What I am going to say I am in a position to prove," he said. "Who that impostor really is I neither know nor care. For the present I suspect him to be one Melville who imposed upon me under the guise of an American correspondent. The rest emanated from his own busy brain. Knowing the country well, he bribed a noted brigand, Nicholi by name, to kidnap the general. Then he proceeded to Athens with a letter of mine containing a photograph of my companion. This was artfully changed for one of his in the character he now represents. The plot was all the more ingenious because nobody in England knew the real Marcos, and so long as we saw his name in the papers

we should not dream that any evil had overtaken him. Fortunately we are in time to prevent further mischief."

Gryde did not need to look up to see what effect this statement had on the audience. He could feel that they believed every word. An angry murmur swelled to a roar.

"Silence!" the Chairman cried; "we must hear the other side. Now, sir?"

He turned to Gryde, who shrugged his shoulders.

"Have you nothing to say?" asked the Duke.

"Absolutely nothing," Gryde smiled. "Why fight facts?"

"Then you admit you are an impostor. If you would like to do anything——"

Gryde rose to his feet, his hand went behind him. The light of battle was in his eyes. It was one man against thousands. There was a million to one chance.

"I should like," he said, "I should like to do this."

As the last word escaped his lips he jumped from the platform to the floor. Then the gas-lights gleamed upon a revolver barrel.

"Back!" Gryde cried. "The first man who touches me dies."

The terrified crowd huddled on either side like sheep. The glare in Gryde's eyes seemed to freeze them. As one bolder than the rest put out a hand, Gryde fired past his head. Women screamed and fainted. Gryde pushed his way to the door.

His resolute will seemed to carry all before him. He could see the darkness of the street beyond. Once outside and he might yet be free. A resolute dash, and then——

Then a stalwart policeman grappled with him. A second later and others would overpower him. There was a whip-like crack, a dazzling flash, and the officer's right arm hung useless at his side. With a yell of triumph, Gryde dashed into the street.

But all danger was not yet averted. There were men young and strong in the audience who tumbled down the steps of the hall and dashed after the fugitive. Sprinting was not one of Gryde's accomplishments, and he found himself hard pressed.

More than once he doubled and turned. Folks passing stopped and wondered ; and there was the chance of being pulled down at any time. Gryde became suddenly conscious that he was passing the door of his own hotel.

Could he dart sideways into this unseen and lie hidden till the foe had passed? There was just a chance that he might do so. A minute later he had flashed into the hall and taken his way up the stairs to his own room. Here he washed his face and cast off his disguise. Then he crept to the head of the stairs and listened.

Silence below, silence for a little time, and then familiar voices. Gryde could hear what they were saying distinctly. Every word he followed intently.

"We must wait till the police come," said one. "No doubt he thinks he has tricked us finely, and for the present he will remain where he is. As the fellow is armed, we shall have to proceed cautiously."

The slow minutes passed. If only Gryde had a disguise here. But that was lying hidden in a spot outside the town. A bell rang close by, a waiter came along carrying something on a tray for a sitting-room on the same landing. Gryde stood hidden in the doorway until the waiter passed again.

Then he stepped out. He had made up his mind what to do.

"You are busy?" he asked.

"No, sir," responded the other, "I am just going off duty. Can I do——"



"I AM GOING NOW, AND I SHALL CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU"

He said no more. Gryde had him by the throat with a grip like steel. He dragged the frightened man into his room and closed the door. The waiter made no struggle, he was absolutely limp with fear.

With a smile Gryde relaxed the scalding grasp.

"I should advise you not to make a noise," he suggested grimly.

"I've got a wife," the panic-stricken waiter gurgled, "and two kids, and I—"

Gryde froze the man with a look. There was no time to lose.

"Now, look here," he hissed; "if you make the slightest noise, I shall be under the painful necessity of scattering your cerebral tissue all over this very tasteful carpet. I should be sorry to do so for the sake of the landlord—and your own. If you care to listen to reason you will be the richer by £50."

The waiter showed signs of returning sanity.

"Seems to me there's no chance to do nothing else," he muttered.

"Quite so. Without asking any further questions, take off your clothes at once. Now then, see if you can do it quicker than I can."

Gryde commenced to peel off his outer garments. In an incredibly short time he had changed places with the waiter. Then he pounced upon the man and with his braces pinned him skilfully to a chair.

"The money I will put in your boot thus," he said. "I am going now, and I shall close the door behind you. See the clock yonder? When that clock ticks off five minutes you can call for help. All you have to do is to tell truthfully how you have been treated, omitting any reference to the Bank of England paper in your boot. But I don't think that I need have any anxiety on that head. You understand?"

The waiter smiled slightly. He began to see that no harm was likely to come to him from the adventure. And he was about to earn more money than he had ever had in his life before.

"All right, guv'nor," he whispered hoarsely, "I'll do as you say, and I hope you'll get out of your bit of trouble all right."

Gryde smiled as he pointed to the clock.

"Once I am outside I will take care of the rest," he said. "Five minutes, remember. I'm afraid you will have to invest in another dress suit, though."

Standing calmly before the glass, Gryde re-arranged his white tie, and then calmly left the room. Down in the hall an excited group was gathered. There were blue uniforms there amongst the rest.

Gryde skirted by them without undue haste. He noted the landlord's agitated face, and heard his trembling tones.

"For heaven's sake, gentlemen," he said, "let there be no violence. It would ruin me."

"We will be careful," the Duke of Clifton was saying. "A desperate character——"

Gryde waited to hear no more. The conversation was not sufficiently interesting. With a matchless audacity, all his own, he elbowed his way through the very people who were thirsting for his blood, and took his way to the hat-stand. Here he selected an overcoat and hat, and putting the same on, left the hotel.

Hundreds of people had gathered there, for the news had spread like wildfire. Gryde muttered savagely to himself as he found himself shut in. At the end of five minutes he had not progressed beyond the end of the street.

Then suddenly a hoarse roar went up. It spread as if by magic to the edge of the crowd that the impostor had escaped—and how. There is no telegraphy like that which flashes through a huge concourse of people.

Gryde burst through and hailed a passing cab. He plunged in headlong.

"Get me to the top of Craven Road in ten minutes," he shouted, "and I'll give you a sovereign."

The driver whipped up his horse, and was in a deserted side street immediately, neither was he aware of the nature of his fare. In the given time the destination was reached.

Gryde paid his man, and hurried away into the darkness. There was a wild thrill of triumph at his heart, for he was free. He was close to the place where his disguise was hidden, and before midnight the same was assumed,



"‘THIS IS THE LAST TIME,’ HE TOLD HIMSELF”

and the dress clothes sunk at the bottom of a deep pool. By daybreak a respectable looking mechanic passed out of Nottingham station to the other side of the town.

Later in the afternoon, Gryde, *in propria persona*, travelled up to London in a first-class carriage.

"This is the last time," he told himself. "I have more money than anyone wants, and sooner or later I'm certain to make some mistake. I'll destroy all my wardrobe and settle down as a model country gentleman.

In one of the most perfectly appointed houses in the North lives Felix Gryde, an English-American, who is reputed to have made a fabulous fortune in the States.

Gryde is a popular and respected figure, and his popularity is shared by a wife who is called Cora. Mrs. Gryde takes a prominent place in society, and the younger men find her extremely fascinating. Like most women, she imagines that her husband has no secrets from her, in which she is greatly mistaken—Gryde's adventures will never be told by him.

"If I had my deserts," he frequently tells himself, "I should be a life convict. And after all there are thousands of greater scoundrels ruling the country and helping to make our laws. They have not been found out, neither have I. And assuredly the wicked flourish like a green bay tree. I ought to know."

THE END.



WRITTEN BY G. BOOTH. ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES LOREIQ

“**M**AKE your game, gentlemen, make your game.” In these few words you have the whole secret of the attractiveness of Boulogne to English tourists. If it were not for the Casino and the tables, the Picardy watering place could put up its shutters. It has a very fine beach, and the bathing is magnificent; but many other places offer the same inducement; and besides these what has Boulogne to offer in its own defence? Out of season, when, the Casino is closed, and, so to speak, wrapped in brown holland, it is a kind of Continental Erith which so depressed Charles Dickens. What little is to be found in the place of life and movement flows not towards the Plage, but ebbs sadly towards the centre of the town. The port may be busy, if statistics are to be trusted, but it is never attractive, and is only less offensive in its odour than in the summer. The cafés are dismal places when shorn of the tourist element, and with the exception of irregular performances at the municipal theatre, the only

forms of amusement outside the domestic circle are the cafés concerts, and that deepest depth of dulness, the masked ball. The festive Boulonnais must have an awful time during the winter months, and must perforce take his pleasures as sadly as the most typical Englishman.

But when the 15th of May brings the summer season all this is changed. The tide turns and flows from the town to the Casino and the Digue. The port, however important it may be, takes a second place, if indeed it is not only allowed to remain to give a general character to the picture. And the industry of Boulogne is fully occupied in making as much as possible out of the tourists. Play is Boulogne's business during the summer, and just before the August Bank Holiday the high change is reached in this mart of pleasure. The overture is the race meeting, which is held on the hills beyond Winnereux, and which is generally brought to a close on the Sunday before the Bank Holiday. On that day a peculiarly Continental fair begins outside the walls of the old town, a very tolerable circus is

usually opened, and the final arrangements for the annual regatta on the Leane are announced, and for a full fortnight everyone takes life at top speed, pulling up suddenly on the third Sunday in August with a religious fête and procession, which is one of the glories of the town, and as a sight is well worth seeing. After this the season behaves itself decorously until October 15th when it closes with a snap, and Boulogne stagnates for another seven months.

Boulogne seems to have been the

and recalls the days when the English were frequent and unwelcome visitors, endeavouring to pay off old scores in the shape of the first Roman invasion somewhere in the B.C.'s, which was planned at and started from Boulogne, which then disguised itself under an alias with a classic sound about it.

But the ordinary tourist, who goes over to Boulogne to enjoy himself, does not trouble much about the old town. The fascinations of the fair take him as far as he wants to go from the beach and the Casino. The fair, which is held



BATHING AT BOULOGNE

result of second thoughts. It was originally a fortified town, built on the spur of a hill a short distance from the sea-shore, but finding the nucleus of a natural port and an attractive beach along their littoral, the Boulonnais decided that they would slide down the hill, and all their modern efforts have progressed in the direction of the sea-front until they culminated in a series of sea-side hotels and the Casino. The old town, still enclosed within massive ramparts, and including the cathedral, has a somewhat old-world appearance,

under the shadow of the Cathedral just outside the walls, is a curiously continental affair. There are of course bazaars where you can purchase almost everything you want, any number of side-shows and variety of roundabouts, and a positively ingenious number of different ways of gambling on a small scale. Roulette at a penny a time goes nearly all through the fair, and raffles on the wheel of fortune principle abound, and if you are tempted by the touts it is with the greatest possible difficulty that you escape without having to carry a

couple of live fowls, or some such white elephant, down to town with you.

Boulogne does not bathe in a casual way. It does not have a dip before breakfast and then do something. It takes a light French breakfast and religiously devotes the whole morning to bathing. The stretch of yellow sand from the Casino to the end of the Plage is covered every fine morning. All the chairs are occupied by people who have bathed, or are waiting to bathe, or would like to if they dare, and every machine is engaged. It is no easy task to secure a machine, and the process very often results in a liberal education in vituperative French. But all things come to him who waits, and most people succeed in getting a machine at some time or other. It may be admitted that Boulogne is not so fashionable as some other bathing places, but there are usually some charming costumes in the sea, and the mingling of the sexes adds distinctly to the picturesqueness of the scene. But there is an utter disproportion of cry and wool in the French system of bathing, and the man who goes out into the sea with the idea of having a swim does not find much to tempt him. If you attempt to swim out, your ardour is soon damped by a man in a boat, who threatens to save you with a boathook, and you are bound to return to your glorified paddle, for that is really the whole system of bathing at Boulogne. You easily make up a party in the water, and having joined hands in a circle, you wait an incoming wave, and at the psychological moment you give a nervous little jump, and allow the tide to carry you a little

nearer to your machine.

This performance is repeated at discretion, and there is not much room for originality of idea, which, indeed, would not be popular if it were introduced. With flirtations in the water and on the beach, the time passes pleasantly enough, but you generally discover at lunch that most of the swimmers have been to the other side of the

harbour to Capécure, where you can get a capital dive into deep water, and the excitement of some stubborn but not particularly dangerous currents.

But the bathing is, after all, only a side show. The play's the thing. The Casino is open in the morning, but

it is little more than a club, and that little all runs in the direction of the earlier *établissement des bains*. In the afternoon and evening it is another tune. The tables are going, and you can take your choice of baccarat or of the *petits chevaux*. The former game is played in a large hall, the prevailing tints of which are green and gold, and a good suggestion of the everlasting French mirror. Running down the centre of the hall are four large tables marked out for the game. The seats round the tables are filled, a large proportion with ladies, and punters stand round, sometimes two and three deep. The smallest stake is 5 francs, or a white counter representing that amount, and any person may stake up to the amount that is in the bank. A red counter about the size of a double-florin represents a louis, and sometimes a larger pearl counter, representing 5 louis, is seen on the green baize. The Casino accepts no speculative responsibility in this game. The bank is sold to the highest bidder, the amount of the bid representing the amount for which the bidder will open the bank. The Casino deducts 10 per cent. for its share, and takes no risk. It may be, that more money is stated on the two tableaux, than is contained in the bank, and in that case if the bank loses, all do not get paid, but on the other hand, if the banker win, a larger amount than was in the bank is not collected from the punters, commencing with the person who took the cards in each tableau. This is a bit confusing to the uninitiated, but to regular players it presents no difficulties, and causes no heart-burnings. The odds between the



banker and the punter are fairly equal, and luck alone brings fortune to either. To enter the baccarat room you are supposed to have a club ticket; but many people manage without, and if a person is challenged it is an easy matter to procure one.

But while in the baccarat room the larger amount of money is won and lost, it is in the rooms devoted to the *petits chevaux*, that the more general gambling takes place. Two of these ingenious machines, dominating six tables, are kept going till past midnight, and all the time money is pouring into the coffers of the Casino. On a centre table are nine little horses of different colours, running in grooves, and worked by machinery underneath the table. The machinery is not concealed because of any trick or deception. All is perfectly fair. A bank that has in its favour odds of something like one in eight, or considerably more than 10 per cent., can afford to do without adventitious assistance. This shows the system of the machine and tables.

An attendant at the machine table turns a handle, which sets the horses moving round, presently brings them in a line, and when they are going at a fair speed, the handle is disconnected and the horses decrease in speed and eventually stop. At the start the attendant in a strident voice, which calls up memories of Orator Frank Richmond of the Wild West Show, invites you to make your game when the horses are stopping, declares that no more money must be staked, and at the end of the tour announces the number of the horse that has won—that is, the one that stops nearest in front of the winning post; if he passes it by so much as a shoe on his tiny hoof he is out of the race. Now as there are nine horses, the natural odds would be eight to one against any particular number, but the bank only gives seven, and therefore practically has one horse—no particular one—running for it the whole time. Again, even money only is paid on the bands, whereas if the middle figure—No. 5—should win the bank collects from both bands. The smallest stake is 1 franc, and the croupiers can always give change, and you may go as high as 25 francs on any

number and even higher on the bands. These figures have been exceeded by arrangement with the management, which is always willing to allow people who have been unlucky a chance of getting their money back. With these odds in favour of the bank, it is impossible for the public to win, but every year you find the English tourist setting out for Boulogne with hope taking its eternal spring; he may, under pressure, express sorrow for the bank, but he is going to break it. Systems without end have been tried and failed; the limit upsets them all. If the stake were unlimited you would only have to double till you won. Pluck and capital would break all banks. But the banks do not gamble. They carry on their business





LES PETITS CHEVAUX

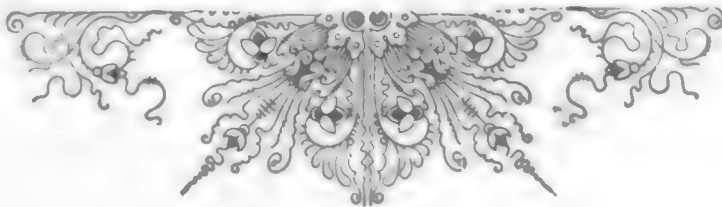
on the sound commercial principle of "Heads I win, tails you lose." But it may be objected that some people must win, or the *petits chevaux* would stop. Some people do win, but they do not win from the bank. They win from the less fortunate players, and the bank plods steadily on with its percentage. There may be times when the bank has a run of bad luck, but the bank plays regularly, and the science of averages comes to its assistance.

The gamblers round the tables are a curious study. Most of them are playing systems of some kind, and not a few are keeping a religious note of the winning numbers as they turn up. These are the sequence players. It usually happens that certain figures follow each other for a time. For instance, 9, 7, and 2 occur in order, and after a few turns they recur in the same order. Very shortly afterwards, the 9, and the 7, will recur, and there is quite a rush on the 2 for the next tour. It is only by keeping a note of the winning numbers that these sequences can be discovered, and many gamblers make quite a business of the book-keeping. Many ladies play as persistently as the men, and some of these are sharks of whom it is well to be wary. They probably stake a franc now and again for the sake of appearances, but their real business is to pick up other people's winnings. When the croupiers throw the money to the winners, they toss the coins on the winning number or the winning band, and these sharks pounce on one of the lots and appropriate it. Sometimes there is a row, sometimes there is not, but it is always difficult to say that a certain person has not put any money on, and, indeed, it is not easy to discover who is the delinquent. The risk is small,

particularly if the thief be a woman, and the profits are undeniable. One of the habitués used to be an unhealthy-looking Hebrew, who always put on his stake at the last possible moment, and from the time that he parted with his coin till the winning number was announced, he assumed an attitude of prayer. Occasionally you see young men hanging eagerly round the tables, but staking no money. As a rule they are city clerks, or something of that kind, who have come over for a fortnight, and instead of breaking the bank as they hoped, have been cleaned out by the bank in a couple of days. Such cases are frequent.

There is no scandal about the place, and Boulogne is proud of its Casino. Some seasons ago an unfortunate man committed suicide on the Digue, a few yards from the Casino. No attempt was made to hush the matter up, and the Casino officials did what was correct and decorous in the matter. But in the town there was noticeable a spirit of elation, which no Boulonnais attempted to hide. Everyone felt that Boulogne had justified itself, and got one step nearer the glories of Monte Carlo. There was no evidence that the man was ever in the Casino, but gossip credited him with having lost an immense fortune at the tables.

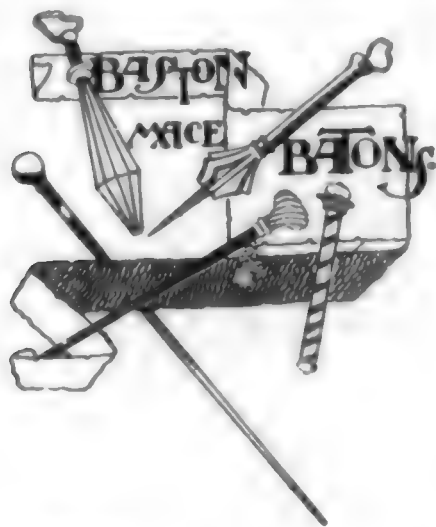
Officially no gambling takes place at Boulogne. The law forbids gambling, and inspectors are sent round to the various casinos to see that none is carried on. The Government official visits Boulogne every year, but his visit is paid in the winter, when there are no visitors and the gaming tables are put away. So the inspector has no difficulty in reporting that he finds no traces of gambling being carried on, and the Casino is whitewashed for another year.



The Evolution of the Stick

WRITTEN BY MRS. HOWARTH

"If you would be adored, be feared. If you would be feared, be a despot. If you would be a despot, be a stick, and strike."—*Turkish Proverb.*



ADAM, so legend has it, inaugurated the stick as a support, a sceptre, and a weapon of defence, with such effect that though the king of beasts rebelled and held out against its potency for some time, even that animal was obliged at last to succumb. Again, the first murder, some authorities surmise and try to prove, was committed with a stick, the bludgeon or club of primitive warriors later, from which the spear, the lance, and even the sword were evolved. Upon this point there is insufficient evidence, and not the convincing *raison d'être* that strengthens Adam's case. But of the marvellous rod of Moses and Aaron, and the wonders it worked, we have the testimony of the Bible.

In effect, these earliest pioneers of the stick contain all the varieties afterwards evolved from it, for they show it to us a support, a weapon, a sceptre and an

instrument of spiritual power, the four great variants the first rude stick pulled from the tree in the Garden of Eden was destined to make.

As a staff, crutch or support, the sign of reverend age, the stick needs no introduction. It is in this form that we recognize it familiarly to-day, just as in ages past the Greeks recognized it, and, too, the Babylonians, among whom it was a sign of differing degrees of dignity and position, without which no man was allowed to go outside his house.

Nor need the cane be formally presented, for it, too, is a familiar friend. But we must not look at this attribute of the well-dressed man's toilette as it is now, if we would see the walking-stick at its zenith, either as an object of beauty or as an elegant social weapon.

Canes were appropriately introduced from America to this country, in the reign of Henry VIII., to partake of the absurd splendour of the dress of the period. We have a description of one, "garnished with golde, havinge a perfume in the toppe, under that a diall, with a pair of twitchers or a pair of compasses of golde, and a foot rule of golde, and a knife and a file, the haffe of golde, with a whetstone tipped with golde," and a second figured with symbols of "astronomie." Before the first comprehensive vade mecum, the modern malacca with its matchbox or dice head pales into insignificance. Even the French sarbacane of the reign of Louis XIII., a pretence weapon-like stick, which the braves of that period sent filled with bon-bons to the ladies whose *beaux yeux* waged war against their susceptibilities, scarcely rivals it. But it is to the picturesque eighteenth century,

with its dainty sartorial extravagances, that we must turn to see the stick at its best. Such sparklings there were from precious stones embroidering in lavish loveliness the ivory, gold or silver of the stick, such flutterings of gay bunched ribands lightly hung round beruffled wrists, so that the dependent cane might not be lost. Chelsea, Battersea, and all the china works de luxe provided heads for canes, jewellers designed exquisitely modelled snuff-boxes; there were silver framed looking-glasses, grotesque Punchinello heads, rare enamels—a motley crew, but one and all in some way perfect. Then “the nice conduct of the clouded cane” was the gauge of the finished beau. Nor did ladies resist the charms of these effective weapons, but whether in masquerade or in very truth, fair shepherdesses, or *grandes dames*, sported them with that refinement of an air given only to women to display. As for the lengths of those old-world walking sticks, they were as many as Fashion freakishly commanded. The longest, Lafayette stalked behind at the Court of Louis XV. He had brought the notion from America. The shortest, the impudent dandy whose soul was set on notoriety would twirl and twist. It may be true, as a French specialist on the subject maintains, that no man who is not a born cane-carrier will ever learn to carry it gracefully; but in the old days of St. James’s and Bath the cane was not merely carried. It was employed; a veritable instrument that gauged the emotions of the exquisite who handled it to a delicate nicety.

To fly from the more flippant aspect of the stick, to its evolution in a serious direction, is to consider the pilgrim’s staff. This, and also the cross and knapsack which with it were insignia of the holy wayfarer, received the priestly blessing ere the devotee set out on his journey. The bourdon, as it was called, was usually of the crutch order, and had swinging from it a wallet, or calabash, in some cases used for the reception of the good man’s worldly wealth, or what folks would bestow upon him; in others, for the cheap wine he received as a gift from sympathising friends as he plodded along his way. In very old missals we see sometimes em-

blazoned illustrations of the bishop’s pastoral stick, afterwards known as the crosier, and notice that from it depends a curious and apparently unmeaning bit of fabric. This was a piece of cloth, used by the bishop, who went on foot about his diocese in those days, as a wiper for his heated brow. The pastoral stick, or crutch, was then shaped as it is shown in the illustration, in order that the bishop, who was always an old man, might benefit by its strength. It was simply made of wood. The crosier, which became later merely a glorified edition of the whilom stick, as mighty as an emblem of spiritual power as the sceptre was of temporal, was a different affair indeed.

At the outset the uses and meanings of the crosier and the sceptre, also their



appearance, bore a strong family resemblance. Charlemagne, for example, had a sceptre which was so like a bishop’s crook that it was once used in the king’s absence by the bishop at a celebration of mass. A certain bishop of Maintz, one Christian, employed his crosier as a weapon, arguing that though the Scriptures had forbidden the use of the sword, they did not stigmatize that of the stick. He therefore ordered a doughty crook to be prepared for his special service, and with it, so ardent a fighter was he, straightway killed nine men. Our illustrations show this essentially shepherd-like shape of the crosier, which was more or less ornamented according to circumstances. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries an immensity of rich work was bestowed



upon these signs of ecclesiastical power, wherein we see plainly the splendour of the Church symbolized. The crosier of William of Wykeham, which is preserved, a precious relic, in New College, Oxford, is a fine example of a fourteenth century crosier.

Abesses, as well as abbots, carried crosiers in the old days of monasteries and nunneries. It used to be their custom to bear them with the crook turned inwards, to signify that they shepherded only their own holy house, in contradistinction to the bishop's method, which was to carry the crook turned outwards, to signify government of a diocese. Before leaving the ecclesiastical stick we should remember the verger's wand. This, in abbeys and cathedrals and in some churches, is carried as a sign of office by the beadles who precede the clergy to the stalls and pulpit. It is a relic of the "make way" days, when order was less prevalent than it is now.

The sceptre is a regal subject in two senses, one to which only scant justice can be done here. Long ago, when symbols were more full of meaning than

they are now, the power of the sovereign's staff was extraordinary. It was believed to possess supernatural potency to heal or bless; kings dealt out clemency by stretching a gracious arm across it, extended it with royal dignity for the kiss of those who, kneeling humbly in the Presence, desired to show submission the profoundest. There is no pattern sceptre; every age, every monarch almost, has had a fresh fancy, and a new length. The fleur-de-lys, the eagle, the cross and the globe were favourite devices. The early kings of France carried, in addition to the sceptre, a small practical stick. Napoleon I. made this pronouncement on the sceptre, "*Le sceptre est un homme, et cet homme c'est moi.*"

The Mace now used in the House of Commons, which is illustrated here, is that ordered and made at the Restoration. It is in length four feet ten and a quarter inches, is of silver gilt, and weighs 257 oz. 2 dwt. 2 gr. The head is adorned with four royal badges and the royal arms of Charles II. This splendid staff is in good company, for the maces of great personages are certainly very imposing and splendid sticks. They are descendants of the old English baston (French *bâton*), or truncheons, formerly carried by leaders in the battle field, once more significant of one of the great original meanings of the stick, a weapon of defence. The small club used in tournaments was called a baston, in contradistinction to the mace, which was the fighting implement of serious contests. A field-marshal's *bâton* is, of course, a lineal descendant of the baston; the proudly-wielded drum-major's bears precisely the same signification. Another leader, that of an orchestra, also commands with the *bâton*. Formerly this was merely a roll of paper or music, shaped to resemble a stick. Lulli was the first leader of opera to use a real stick. Meyerbeer delighted in one of massive gold. Only the other day the Queen gave a beautiful *bâton* to the conductor of one of the bands that she had commanded to play before her.

In its baser uses the stick has not evolved to any very interesting extent. The schoolmaster has assisted it to expand into the birch-rod, and the law into

the cat-o-nine tails, the Chinese mandarin has established the bastinado, and the Russian autocrat the knout. A sorry crew of flagellants with self-inflicted stripes, of wives beaten by husbands with the law's consent, of subjects chastised for any and every offence, of martyrs scourged, with, flitting here and there among them, the whimsical substitute, the whipping boy and bastinado proxy, huddle shrieking through the limbo of the past in crowds, through the present, also, in less numbers but enough.

The Russian ceremony of peasant marriage used to include, and perhaps still does, the presentation of a stick to the bridegroom from the bride's father. With it the father thrice dealt his daughter a blow, observing that from that hour he resigned his authority to her husband. Of course the gallant bridegroom had to reply that his wife would never need chastisement, but the father, with the disagreeable wisdom of age, was wont to assure him that so he too once thought, but that his views were changed.

It naturally follows that the stick, from which so many extraordinary variants have been evolved, has been and is the subject of mysterious reverence and strange uses. General Gordon will always go down to posterity with his short cane beneath his arm, as we see him in his statue in Trafalgar Square; nor is it difficult to understand the superstitious awe with which the Chinese beheld it and the occult power they believed it to possess. Mesmer, the great French "mesmerist," made much play with his stick. The divining rod has been repeatedly in the past and is now used, perhaps not to discover murders, as it was, but to find water. At one time mysterious sticks that talked, and sticks that foretold the future, and sticks that were able

through touch to baffle the devil's power, were the source of huge revenues to the magicians and religious houses fortunate enough to possess them. The stick has taken the part of the pen, as the ratification of a bond when the contracting parties could not write; it has divorced people, for in old days the breaking of a stick sufficed in France to separate a married pair; it has been the bond of good fellowship, a stick broken in two was the *gage d'amitié* between travellers; it has been, in short, ubiquitous.

When Harlequin dominates the stage, his magic wand changes what it will, with wonderful celerity, into what it likes. Just one thing even that rare staff could not accomplish, and that its own obliteration. For the stick supports, fights, awes, punishes, commands through the ages, and will, it may be supposed, until the end of all things.



A Lothian Walk

WRITTEN BY FRANCIS WATT. ILLUSTRATED BY A. HENLEY



SOME five miles south-east of Haddington a curious hill called Trapain Law rises abrupt and solitary from the bank of the river Tyne. Here, among the untrodden ways, our walk begins. And first we make the ascent, not an arduous matter, for it is only some 700 feet. There are no trees on Trapain, but it is covered with an abundant growth of nettles. On the lower slope, in due season, you raise pheasant or partridge. A little higher up flocks of crows are ruminating the results of a recent field foray; these take wing heavily and unwillingly, cawing the while in shrill protest against you as trespasser. Rabbits are, however, the true lords of the soil, and you catch glimpses of them scurrying about in undisguised alarm. They have burrowed until the whole surface is full of holes, and you had better walk warily, else you will find yourself prone among the nettles. They have loosened the surface so that your upward path is attended by a rattle of falling stones, which you dislodge at every step. I must mention the sheep which here and there nibble the scanty grass, and the census of the hill-folk is complete.

The view from the top is said to include thirteen counties; enough that the Lothians are before us; to the north is the Firth of Forth; North Berwick Law, which might seem twin sister to Trapain, and the Bass Rock are

most prominent on the near coast; you trace the river Tyne for a great distance winding through the fields, now hid under clumps of trees, or between high banks, now sparkling in the open. It winds round the hill upon which you stand, and so on to the sands of Bell Haven Bay and the German Ocean. West is the county town, the limit of your walk, and a long way further off a cloud of smoke and the outline of a hill mark where the lion watches over Edinburgh Town. To the south the land swells upwards towards the Lammermoors, whose soft rounded shapes make so fit a border for a cultivated landscape. They suffer the plough far up their sides, the bees pasture on their heather, and the sheep roam near and far without fear of precipice. As for the broad expanse of hill and plain, wood and mansion, and town and village, and farmsteadings, it were vain to attempt minute description. It is superbly cultivated landscape such as Virgil praised in "stollist measure," such as we now think inferior to savage mountain prospects. There are some strange old stones on the top of the hill; two of them are called the Maiden Stones; if a girl can squeeze herself through the narrow space between them she is sure (so the story runs) to be married in the course of the year. It is not difficult to start a legend, and this myth may be of very recent date, but the stones, one fancies, were put there by human hands, and they may have been connected with the rites of that dim pagan time of which it is given to us to know so little. Anyhow, the hill has a legend of quite respectable antiquity. Trapain has an older and finer name—Dunpender to wit, which being interpreted means the "steep hill," the reason being that some of its



TRAPAIN LAW

sides are precipitous ; and thereby hangs this tale. The last of the pagan kings who ruled here was one Leudonus. Great warrior and strong man was he, and after him, even to the present day, is the land called Lothian. He had one daughter, Thaney, who had in secret become a Christian. Ewen, son of Ewegende, also a potent prince, sought her in marriage, but him Thaney refused, professed her faith, and announced her intention of taking the veil ; and, spite the threats and entreaties of her father, she abode steadfast in her determination. At the foot of Dunderpender there lived a swineherd, the man lowest in station of all the kingdom ; he was brought to Court, and there, in the great hall of the palace, Thaney was confronted with him and with Ewen ; if she would not marry the prince, then must she live with the swineherd and share his rough labours. She was no whit moved, so the swineherd took her by the hand and led her to his hut by the waterside under the shadow of the great hill ; but he too was, in secret, of the new faith, and he served her well and loyally, as a princess should be served. Now Ewen's fierce passion caused him to waylay her and do her violence, and when this was told the king, her father, he, jealous of the

honour of his house, ordered the prince to be beheaded and his daughter to be stoned to death, as was indeed the law, but only for them that were guilty. None was found to cast a stone at her, so the king said, " Let her be thrown from the top of Dunderpender " ; but as they hurled her down, she made the sign of the cross, and so was found unhurt by those who came to bury her. Then they brought her again to the king, but still he did not relent, but ordered her to be taken to the seashore and put in a little boat of hides, made after the old Scots' fashion, and committed to the mercy of the waves without oar or rudder, " For," quoth Leudonus, " if she be worthy of life, her God will free her from the peril of death if so He will." All this was done, but the boat went forward of its own accord in a straight line to the opposite coast ; there, on the cold shore, she gave birth to a son. Mother and child were brought to the sainted Servanus, then preaching the gospel to the natives of those parts. A vision had already warned him of the coming of the strangers ; he received them kindly and baptised the child. Such is the legend of the birth of Saint Kentigern.

Another memory of later years has a more human and passionate, if more earthly interest. Looking down from

Trapain you see by the waterside the ruin of an old castle, built on a piece of land that juts out into the Tyne, whose waters have for centuries washed its sides. It is a mere shell, clean gone to wreck and ruin, trees grow among its crumbling stones, it is all unroofed, and there are great gaps in the walls. In the hall is a huge green mound, in the court-yard by the river you might pitch your tent for a month (one fancies) and never be disturbed, for in truth there is no road that way; you still trace the well whence the vanished dwellers drew their water, and the fruit trees are still thick in the old garden, though it were

year Mary was returning from Stirling, where she was visiting her son; Bothwell met her at Fountainbridge and led her away with scarce the show of resistance. The ultimate destination was Dunbar, but some brief stay was made at Hailes Castle. She must have wandered in that old garden, listened as you listen to-day to the swirl of the stream, and lifted up her eyes to the mass of overhanging hill, and pondered in that moment of quiet on troubles past and still greater troubles to come. Not such a "haunt of ancient peace" this out-of-the-way, crumbling old castle, down in its nook by the river, when you come to



HAILES CASTLE

hard to trace the walks or the original plan. Such to-day is Hailes Castle. In 1557, that fateful year in Queen Mary's life, it was possessed by James Hepburn, afterwards Duke of Orkney and Shetland, better known to history as the Earl of Bothwell; he was of an old Lothian family. Knox, with unwonted tenderness, reminded him that his own forefathers had served the Earls, and the most fascinating woman of all history gave him her love and her crown, and with it all he was a common, coarse ruffian. In April of that fated

think of it! But Dunpender is casting a lengthening shadow over the fields, and we must set off towards the country town. The orthodox road runs along a ridge, but you may make a way for yourself by following the course of the river upwards. The stream winds about—"Tyne tortoise-like that flows," says Drummond of Hawthornden, but you have a succession of charming pictures of tender and *spirituelle* beauty, if the way be a little longer. Ruskin has remarked on the distinct note of Scots rivers, and I am sure I could tell that of

Tyne among a hundred others. The gentle fall to the sea, the pebbles over which it glides, the grassy banks it washes, the rustle of the willow and alder trees that bend into its waters and are moved hither and thither by the current at some little distance—such a soft and tender murmur, with a pathetic, half-human touch about it, in keeping with the peaceful and cultivated scenes that its course discloses. “You hear her streams repine,” says Scott, “exactly rendering the chime of the falling water.”

Yet it is to the dreamer of dreams that Tyne haughs and reaches bloom most fair. The cultured and ordered beauty of those sweet fields grows greater with each succeeding year. Ever dearer that touch of hill and field, mixed with memories of the great moments of life, for those remain where much hath passed away; “sweet the fields the lost ones ploughed”; sweet to look on the same scenes with opening and dying eyes! Yet *et dulcia linquimus arva* is the record of each generation; each year the folk are less and less; the fruits of the earth are gathered in due course, but the splendour of their bloom is for our finer eyes.

But we come to a mill and a bridge and a small hamlet, and our two roads unite for a little. A fine old bridge that, dating from mediæval times, of beautiful red stone, charming to look on! True, its piers are sunk deep, and a stone is displaced here and there; but they built well in those days, and some centuries will pass ere a new *brig* is called for; and though the way across be narrow, it is broad enough for all that walk thereon. Above the bridge there is a charming stretch of river. Tall Scots firs line one bank; on the other is a green haugh, with some edging of trees, and behind the ground swells up to the Girleton Hills. A cascade bounds this stretch, but the turmoil it makes is soon stilled. A noble park succeeds the firs, and in it a fine red-stone mansion house; to-day it bears the name of Amisfield. The path by the river is not much frequented save by anglers, but 'twere hard to find a pleasanter walk in the early summer or autumn, when the result of the year's

labour is writ large on the fields, and the scented west wind blows in your face, and the magic light of a northern summer's evening is in your eyes.

Quiet and peaceful enough; yet if you care for ancient stories and half-forgotten chronicles, you will soon people it with ghosts of old horrors. The hamlet you have just past is the Abbey; its name preserves the memory of a Cistercian nunnery, whereof not a stone remains. A Scots Parliament met here in 1548, and agreed to that fateful marriage of Queen Mary with the Dauphin of France. There used to be a graveyard, and I think that within the memory of men still living a part of that God's acre was respected by the tillers of the soil; but they make the most of land in East Lothian. There as of old the *colonus* is *avidus* and his *labor improbus*. In the fields the plough goes up to the very root of the hedges; it reaches far up the hill-side, and year by year it shore away a strip from this field of the dead which it was no one's interest to defend, and so now, in the corner of some fields, the corn is greener in spring, and rears up a taller head in autumn, and that is all the monument of those dead and gone generations. To-day the Abbey is popularly remembered as the scene of a vulgar murder in the early years of the century, but I leave that to tell the more tragic legend of Amisfield. In the last years of James II. the place then called New Mills was the property of Sir James Stanfield, a Yorkshire gentleman who had established a cloth manufactory there. Early in the morning of the last Sunday in November, in 1687, the body of this Sir James was found floating in the Tyne, a little to the west of Haddington. In the following February his eldest son, Philip, was tried for the murder, in the gloomy old Tolbooth, at Edinburgh. The matter excited great interest, and a very full report of the proceedings has come down to us. A week before his death Sir James met Mr. Roderick McKenzie, advocate, early in the day, in the Parliament Close, Edinburgh, whereupon “the defunct invited him to take his morning draught.” Mr. McKenzie was nothing loth, and the two repaired to a tavern hard by, and

there Sir James confided to his friend his terror of his son, whom he described as "the greatest debauch in the earth," and there was evidence also that the son had on several occasions attempted his father's life, and had spoken of him in far from friendly terms. His father "girred upon him," he said, "like a sheep's head in a tongs." On the last Saturday in November, Sir James was in Edinburgh with Mr. John Bell, a minister of the gospel. It may be he had some apprehension of the tragedy of the next few hours, for he earnestly desired Mr. Bell to return to New Mills with him. On their arrival they had supper together, and then Sir James accompanied his guest to his chamber, and after much rational and sensible discourse, left him about ten o'clock at night. Mr. Bell retired to rest, but was quickly startled out of his sleep by a cry; he listened, heard people moving about, "a great din and confused noise of several voices." Honest Mr. Bell was driven near distraught with fright. He put down the commotion to evil, wicked spirits, so bolted and secured the chamber door, and gat him to bed and his prayers with great fervour. Again he heard the voices, but

lower, outside his window, and dying away in the direction of the river. He plucked up courage to go to the window and look out, but saw nothing, only towards the morning there was a sound of walking on the stairs. A little after daylight Philip came to his chamber and told him that he had been seeking his father upon the water. Mr. Bell thought this a strange remark, and went outside, when a man came running up and said that Sir James had been found lying in the water, whereat good Mr. Bell was stricken with "such astonishment, fear, and trembling," that his subsequent remarks are quite without value, and the story is best continued by Umphrey Spurway, an Englishman engaged in the cloth business at New Mills. He was informed on the Sunday morning that Sir James had been found in the river. He went to the spot and saw the body about eight feet from the brink, floating in the water. Though a hard frosty morning, the ground at the water's edge was "beaten to mash," as if several people had been treading there. That Sunday Umphrey sent the news to Edinburgh. On Monday he came out of his house about four in the morning; he noted men with lights,



LAMERMUIR HILLS

moving up and down before Sir James's gate, and saw that several horses were drawn up there. He asked what was the matter, and was told that the body was to be forthwith taken to Morham for burial. Morham, I must explain, is a parish south of Haddington, towards the Lammermoors. The church is not so near as Haddington, though it may have been the Stanfield burying-ground. Honest Umphrey thought of coroners' inquests in England, and was much scandalized. On the Tuesday night, however, he was summoned from bed by a party of surgeons and officials

the body on his hands and clothes. Philip loosened his hold, fell half-fainting on a seat in the church, crying out piteously, "Lord, have mercy upon me." The horror-stricken spectators called for strong waters for him, for he seemed like to faint away. At this point in the trial the Crown proposed to call as witness James Thomson, a boy of thirteen. Counsel for the prisoner objected, but the jury insisted on hearing the child. On the fateful Saturday night Philip Stanfield came to James' father's house. The boy was ordered off to bed, and beaten because he did



ABNEY BRIDGE

from Edinburgh, who showed him an order from the Lord Advocate for the disinterring of the body. The party set off to Morham through the night. The grave was opened and the coffin taken out and carried into the church, and there the surgeons proceeded with their ghastly examination. When they were finished the grave clothes were again wrapped about the poor corpse; the nearest relatives of the deceased were told to place him in the coffin, and then a terrible thing happened. When Philip touched the right side of his father's head and shoulder, blood gushed forth from

not obey. He pretended to go to sleep, but listened to everything that went on. Stanfield and a woman called Janie Johnstoun left the house about eleven; his father and mother followed them. In the midst of the night his parents crept softly in again. They called out to the boy; he kept silent, that they might think he was sleeping. He heard his father say that the deed was done, that he never thought a man would have died so soon, and tell how after Sir James was strangled his body was carried down and thrown into the water that it might be thought he had killed himself.

Other strange and terrible details followed. Sir George McKenzie (the "bluidy Mackenzie" of covenanting story and tradition) summed up for the Crown this strange mass of evidence in a powerful and eloquent speech, wherein due place was given to the gruesome scene in Morham kirk. The prisoner was forthwith found guilty, and then John Leslie, dempster (or executioner), "pronounced for doom" (as the custom was) the capital sentence against him, which was duly executed on the 15th of February at the Marcet Cross of Edinburgh, with every circumstance of ignominy.

In after years New Mills came into the possession of the notorious Colonel Charteris, whose memory Arbuthnot's epitaph, and still more Pope's bitter lines, will keep for ever infamous in the minds of men—so terrible a thing it was to incur the enmity of that misshapen little Alexander: Charteris gave the

place its present name from the home of his family in Nithsdale, and from him it descended to the house of Wemyss, its present possessors.

To the south Amisfield is bounded by a high wall, behind which there is a belt of trees. They call the wall and the road by it Charteris Dykes; you may reach the town from the Abbey that way, but it is rather a gloomy walk, for there is the wall on the one hand, and a rise in the ground shuts off the view on the other. If you turn round you note that Traprain Law, wherefrom you started, seems to have followed you so as to block the east end of the road, and before you is the great square tower of the fine old church at Haddington. Decidedly an eerie walk this, "'twixt the gloaming and the mirk," especially if your head be full of some of those mournful old memories; but you press on, and are soon amidst the lights of Haddington.



The Red Rosary

WRITTEN BY K. L. MONTGOMERY. ILLUSTRATED BY ENOCH WARD



HE crucifix on the carved penthouse of La Voisin's lodging creaked dismally, wind-swung.

La Voisin, within, disposing *flacons* of *bouquet du roi* about the shop, shivered at the sound, unpleasantly recalling the gallows swinging on the Place de Grève. The fortune-teller manipulated a card-pack, glancing incessantly at the doorway.

"Two blondes!" she muttered, "crossing each other's lines! They meet under Death's shadow, he keeps pace, severs them! Hé, the *monsieur*! Death joins him with one also,—which?" The cards flew like hailstones. "Dear Devil!" she whispered, "nothing but Death, Death, Death!"

"The common fate," said a quiet voice. La Voisin started, eyeing disparagingly the customer with such trick of noiseless entrance. A slight woman was there, her narrow face paler for the almost conventual black robes, but two lackeys without indicated her respectability.

"Madame says truly," La Voisin assented. "*Enfin*, life comes first, more precious for its fleetness. Will Madame — essences, philtres? To conquer a gallant is, for La Voisin, as easy as the scenting a kerchief."

"I come not here to talk of *life*," was the answer, accentuated by the customer's pale blue eyes, where opal fire-sparks seemed to glow. "Show me your wares."

Momentarily the fortune-teller scanned her, then turned. On

touching a spring, the shelves of the wall behind slid sideways, revealing a glass-fronted cabinet.

"Does Madame fancy a missal?" La Voisin asked, "the initials sewn with gold, and the *Litany for the Sick* pricked out with red?"

A flash quivered under the purchaser's eyelids.

"The device lacks subtlety," she objected. "A Book of Hours, rendering further devotions superfluous, is ingenious, but betrays itself with, at least, the second worshipper. La Voisin, doubtless, has further to display?"

Silently La Voisin detached a rosary, hanging against the crimson arras. The dark-red beads, carved into tiny skulls, showed like blood-drops against the brown hand.

"Bah!" exclaimed the lady. "Such a chaplet, *ma bonne*, could scarce escape notice in a *Te Deum* at Notre Dame!"

"Precisely. All the world would notice Madame's rosary, should she carry it."

"I? St. Geneviève forefend!"

"Madame is over-cautious. Behold!"

She twisted a bead adroitly in her fingers. The little death-mask divided, shelling husk-like from a similar skull underneath.

"Some day Madame's rosary will be a souvenir for some-one, in Madam's thoughts. *But the seeds of death will be ripe for husking.*"

Silently the women confronted each other, a fencer's intentness wiping expression from their faces.

"What price?" asked the lady suddenly. "Eighty pistoles! 'Tis the price of a pilgrimage!"

"Aye, to the land of death," returned La Voisin.

A retort froze on the lady's tongue, as her glance strayed over a suit of cinque-cento armour, against the wall. From the partially closed visor an unmistakable breath misted. Madame stood tense, instinctively divining an unseen gaze. With cat-like alertness

pallor, he laughed, executing as elaborate a bow as the cuirass permitted.

"Mars trespasses on the mysteries of Venus!" he cried. "Ah, the secret of Madame's beauty lies in disdain of the toilette's secrets!"



"THEY MEET UNDER DEATH'S SHADOW"

she sprang forward, unclasping the headpiece with steady hand.

"Monsieur has narrow lodgings!" she observed.

A handsome man stood revealed, the gold-chased mail suiting well his brown aquiline features. Glimpsing the lady's

"Favour me by removing these trappings, Monsieur," replied the lady composedly, a rapier-like gleam in the pale eyes.

The man complied, smiling mischievously as he displayed a tall figure clad in scarlet and white.

"Madame permits—that I introduce Godin de St. Croix, seigneur—of his tumbledown fortunes, alas!"

"Monsieur is doubtless not related to that St. Croix lately released from the Bastille?"

"Madame's judgment is less penetrating than her eyes. St. Croix has, indeed, been freed, only to fall into another captivity, harder because more hopeless."

The privet whiteness of Madame's skin tinged under his bold eyes.

"Monsieur is of the Court?"

"That felicity is mine."

"I have a fancy to know what his Sacred Majesty would say to one of his officers frequenting a — *fortune-teller's* lodging!"

"Ah, Madame, Venus and Cupid are kin! Can Mars withstand a double attack? A sight of the—Marquise de Brinvilliers—is worth a most abominable cramp."

The name was spoken with the confidence with which a basset-player might flick down a winning card. Madame, grasping the situation, knew by the immobility of the brown-skinned woman in the background, by the man's careless smile, the proclaimed identity had forced her hand.

"The Marquise de Brinvilliers is obliged, Monsieur. Will M. de St. Croix escort me to my hotel, and afford M. le Marquis his acquaintance?"

La Voisin, normally observant, as perfectly comprehended the scrutiny with which the man mastered his would-be hostess, as she appreciated the motive of watchfulness prompting the invitation, but the faint glow on Madame's paleness baffled her. St. Croix, offering the Marquise his hand, declared his readiness to follow eternally.

"I have no chair," observed the lady, stepping along the ill-paved street. "Observation is best avoided by the woman purchasing cosmetics."

"*Halle-la*, Madame!" St. Croix said coolly. "We can afford frankness. Madame la Marquise has all to lose, I all to gain—gold, friends, the prestige of connection with your house; and Madame—may find me useful."

The two were skirting the Place de Grève before Madame spoke.

"Is it true that in the Bastille you shared the Italian Exili's cell?"

"Perfectly, Madame."

"He instructed you?"

"As a priest an acolyte."

Madame's next words were very low.

"Men say he had a secret—the *succession powder*."

"It is mine."

Madame halted, stepping on the long shadow of the gibbet, rearing stark outlines above the place.

"Then, M. de St. Croix, I accept the alliance."

The remaining distance to the Hôtel de Brinvilliers was traversed silently. Madame led the way into a chamber, bare as a Carmelite's cell, but for a luxurious divan, and a negro, holding a gold repoussé salver laden with sweetmeats and wines.

St. Croix, sprinkling his finger-ring with Burgundy from a Venetian glass, smiled.

"The opal's verdict on Madame's hospitality is doubtless desirable at times," he remarked.

"Ah, you misjudge!" murmured the woman. "Naturally an inconvenient person may chance to receive his—billet in a *bouillon*, but one chooses not the road when necessity drives. I am but a woman!"

The entrance of a gentleman, resplendent in white and silver, interrupted her.

"Permit that I present the Seigneur de St. Croix to the Marquis de Brinvilliers," said Madame frankly. "My friend M. de St. Croix comes on a secret matter, retirement suits him. Can we persuade him to be our guest?"

"We shall be your debtors, Monsieur," bowed the Marquis. "The Marquise cares little for gaiety, perhaps you may persuade her not to immolate herself to good works."

"Ah, we shall divert ourselves," remarked Madame demurely. "I find Monsieur shares my *penchant* for alchemy. Come, Monsieur," as her husband lounged away, "for once I am major-domo."

"Under her hand, a wall-panel slipped back, a dark passage appearing. Groping along the masonry, the Marquise, rolling back another panel, allowed a

whiff of acrid incense to steal into the corridor, out of which they emerged into a small chapel. A balcony afforded egress to a courtyard where a Judas tree swayed over a well, and a wall screened the street without.

"Does Monsieur wonder at my choice of a laboratory?" Madame de Brinvilliers asked.

"Madame poses as *dévoté*," her companion retorted.

The earthy sweetness of jonquils in the altar vases smote the senses, as Madame pressed the nail in the right palm of the Christ above, causing the entire altar to revolve noiselessly, giving entrance to a chamber beyond.

The Marquise sprang towards a brazier, the red glow of which under the bellows flickered on the black figure, the crimson rosary swinging with her haste.

"Quick, Monsieur!" she exclaimed; "to work! My servants respect my devotions; we shall be undisturbed. Haste! I thirst to drain Exili's wisdom!"

During days to come his fellow-worker's personality impressed St. Croix strangely. Cool, daring, resolute, a dreadful eagerness possessed her, very sleuth-hound on the death-trail. Yet the glittering eyes and steady hands of the poisoner at the crucible thrilled him less than to see colour rising at his voice, the sense of the passion with which he had inspired the Brinvilliers imposed

a chill fascination on him. On the afternoon, completing the experiments wherein the disciple had outstripped the master, the latter felt lightened of a stifling fear.

"Madame is apt," he said half-mockingly. "I play instructor no longer."

Madame, contemplating a phial, the contents clear as spring-water, representing thirteen days of toil, raised her eyes.

"You would leave me, Godin!"

"Ah, Marquise, if Adam had fled from the tempting fruit, Eden would still exist."



"MADAME CONTEMPLATING A PHIAL"

"It exists still!" she murmured. Lithely she wreathed her arms about his neck. "Beloved, canst not find a key to it?"

Dominated by her will, the man clasped her. She drew him towards the chapel, with decision.

"Swear to love me for ever," she cajoled.

"I swear," St. Croix responded helplessly. Her arms tightened about him.

"My heart, love breeds suspicion. Swear on the Christ to espouse me when the Marquis—removes himself."

"I swear to wed thee, widow!"

"'Tis well," cried the Marquise gaily; "now to work."

"Whither away?"

"'Tis my day for the Hôtel Dieu. Perhaps my visit may alleviate some poor soul's suffering."

Smiling significantly, she descended the outer stair. The smile lingered as she entered the hospital, her glance turning from bed to bed.

"What cheer to-day, Martin?" she enquired.

"Bad, Madame!" gasped the sufferer.

"Yet, since Madame comes, it is a white day."

"Poor friend, the pain is cruel. See, a prayer on these beads, blest by our Holy Father, must avail."

Her gloved fingers drew forward the scarlet rosary.

"If Madame would permit," pleaded the man, extending a wasted hand. "What His Holiness has touched, must heal."

Watchfully Madame knelt by him. But few beads had been fingered, before a bluish pallor overspread the patient's face, the sunken eyes filmed slightly.

"Help, for the love of God!" exclaimed Madame de Brinvilliers, dropping the chaplet into her pocket.

A lady near responded to the call, wiping the death-damp from the man's brows. Madame knelt as though paralysed, her eyes devouring the death-struggle.

"Let Madame compose herself; he hardly suffered," urged the stranger. "How peaceful he looks; perchance he is happier than we," she finished, tears misting her sapphire eyes.

Madame de Brinvilliers' hunger of

gaze changed into observation. The dark uniform affected by voluntary nurses of the hospital moulded itself to the perfect figure beside her, the white cap crowned maize-coloured hair aureoling an oval face, its carnation tints pale with weeping. Genuine sympathy dawned in the Marquise's face.

"Mademoiselle is young, youth deserves happiness," she observed.

"Ah," sighed the girl, "happiness is brief, and life is long."

"Long enough to wait patiently the turn of Fortune's wheel. If Mademoiselle permits, an older woman's counsel is at her service."

"Ah, to hear a kind voice! For that I incommode Madame with my grief. Father, brothers, even sister, chide from matins to vespers; here alone, I remain undisturbed."

"While the *cause* swaggers abroad in a *just au corps*?" Madame suggested archly.

"Ah, he was thrown into the Bastille. Since his release, my woman arranged a meeting at La Voisin's, near the Rue de l'Arbre sec, but they locked me within my chamber. Not a syllable can I hear of him."

The muscle serving for Madame de Brinvilliers' heart, triumphant in the personal happiness achieved that day, sympathised with the young beauty.

"Weep not my child. Tell me your parents' name, perhaps persuasion might avail."

"I am Diane de Verneuil," said the girl. "My father is Comte de Bernay, we lodge in the Hôtel Verneuil."

"Mademoiselle, I am ever so little a sibyl," smiled the Marquise. "I predict that within the month your difficulties will vanish. I await you here, four weeks hence; fail not."

She knelt by the pallet, peering into the dead face.

"No odour, no symptom of suffering" she thought, rising decorously for departure. "The '*Succession*' aims the bead's bullet straight. Now to compass that poor child's turn."

She passed towards the Rue de l'Arbre sec, entering the trinket shop noiselessly.

"Do you number a reduced gentle-



"MYSTERIOUS VISITORS FREQUENTED THE
COURTYARD"

man among your acquaintance?" she questioned La Voisin. "One with the *grand air* capable of association with the nobility. You do. *C'est bien*. Let him obtain *entrée* to the Hôtel Verneuil"—the fortune-teller's nostrils dilated—"rendering himself acceptable to the

family. Within the month, he will offer them a collation in Regnard's gardens—those beyond the Tuileries' chestnuts—but," impressively, "Mademoiselle Diane will not be invited!"

As the spring moon waxed, mysterious visitors frequented the courtyard of the

Judas-tree, holding conference with Madame de Brinvilliers.

On the day, however, of Mademoiselle de Verneuil's tryst, the Marquise was punctual at the Hôtel Dieu, starting amazedly at the mourning tokens dimming the brilliant beauty of the girl meeting her.

"Ah, Madame!" she burst out, "that cruel prophecy! Wretch that I was to repine against those I loved, all, all, snatched from me!"

"Holy Virgin! What sayest thou?"

"The calamity is common talk! Brothers, father, sister! Ah, that *maudite* fête!"

"Calm thyself!" entreated the Marquise. "Let me share thy sorrow!"

"Madame, 'tis past sharing. 'Tis scarce a month that a gentleman of quality obtained an introduction to my father, preferring a suit for my sister. Athénée favours him. He gives a sylvan feast in Regnard's gardens. Suddenly a spray bursts from a chestnut trunk, silver drops sprinkle them; they exclaim at the ingenuity of the 'surprise,' a device of Le Nôtre. Ah, Madame, within three hours they are corpses!"

"Poisoned by the gentleman?"

"Mystery! The *question* fails with Regnard, he swears ignorance, even of the poison instilled in the 'surprise.' The stranger has vanished!"

"My friend, I cannot desert thee," the Marquise exclaimed impulsively. "My secluded mansion shall shelter thy grief."

Speculation mingled with sympathy in the china-blue eyes contemplating Mademoiselle's face. M. de Brinvilliers susceptible, Diane de Verneuil fair, love, not death, might procure Madame the freedom so passionately desired.

Yet, in the first week of Diane's sojourn, her gentle indifference annihilated the project. On St. Croix's return, after a temporary absence, the Marquise waxed eloquent on the subject.

"The Marquis protests she is *la Belle au bois dormant* of Madame d'Aulnoy's fairy tale. Ah, Godin, if a flame like mine consumed her!"

She smiled alluringly. Impatience born of passion possessed her, the fierce nature heaved against its bonds. For once the serpent's sinuous tardiness gave

place to the tiger's leap; the moon that night illumined the Marquise at her crucible, working with the ardour of a spirit in hell.

"At thy prayers always!" Mademoiselle de Verneuil accused her friend's pallor next day. "Thou chidest my strict mourning, thou, a very nun!"

"We will make fête to-day," Madame said gaily; "drink chocolate under the Judas-tree in honour of its first purple blossoms. The Marquis shall forget his megrims and join us."

As the women appeared in the shady courtyard, M. de Brinvilliers was stirred sharply. Robed in white, relieved by the garnered colour-splendour of her hair, Mademoiselle de Verneuil's lily-like beauty harmonized with the summer-warm afternoon.

"Ah, for a blossom!" she cried, pointing to the rosy blooms overhead, as the Marquis grasped the nearest cluster.

"To rest in Mademoiselle's bosom, beatified flower!" he exclaimed.

"Like life, the blossom beyond reach is fairer," drawled Madame de Brinvilliers, indicating a purple rose chalice. Her husband secured it.

"The effort of attainment enhances the fairness," he smiled, but Diane turned from him, her violet eyes riveted on St. Croix's entering figure. Pressing the Judas blossom idly against his lips, the Marquis curiously observed her rose flushing, her startled ecstasy of attitude.

Among cushions heaped on the well-curb the Marquise, observing her husband closely, followed his glance. St. Croix's eyes, alight with blue fire at glimpse of Mademoiselle de Verneuil, swerved to Madame, crouching like some sleek beast of prey.

"The Marquis swoons!" he exclaimed, catching the swaying figure in his arms. He slipped the opal ring from his finger, shaking a colourless powder from it.

A slight foam gathered on M. de Brinvilliers' lips, as St. Croix forced the antidote down his throat. The deathly rigidity relaxed, the sufferer's features quivered; his supporter glanced up with *sang froid*.

"A good soldier goes armed," he observed lightly. "Paris air is pestilential. 'Tis wise to carry a remedy against

attacks. Before the lackeys, *Mesdames*, I entreat, be silent!"

Darting a pregnant glance at Made-moiselle Diane, he withdrew to direct the Marquis' transport; Madame la Marquise evaded her friend's clasp.

"*Ma belle*, I retire: I must master myself before my husband asks for me."

With a look of baffled evil, she glided away, Diane sunk stunned upon her cushions. In the Marquise's guest she had recognised the lover, unseen for weeks: St. Croix's warning to secrecy chilled her joy vaguely.

A familiar footfall roused her from her thoughts; St. Croix approached.

"Chut!" he whispered. "It is of utmost importance we should speak privately. Seek the oratory within thy chamber!"

He was gone. In the gathering dusk, the mist of fear thickened on the girl, throbs of expectation sickened her.

Stealthily through the outer chamber a shadow stole, the shadows of the immense four-post bedstead engulfed it.

A cautious knock thrilled Diane to her feet, St. Croix entered, catching the girl to him.

"At last, my love! News of thee hailed me yesterday. We must flee quickly from this abominable house!"

"Godin! what mean you?"

"Hist, little one! know you not Madame la Marquise is—a poisoner?"

A stifled shriek escaped Diane.

"Silence, in God's name! my con-

vent flower, thou guessest not the rage for the science that possesses men and women; they *lust* to kill! In durance I shared an Italian's cell, he named the Brinvilliers as a purchaser of his deadly wares. In the tryst at La Voisin's the Marquise appeared — God's thunder, what was that?"



"'CHUT,' HE WHISPERED."

The creak of the bedstead in the chamber beyond. Forget not Madame's purchase at the poisoner's, St. Croix!

"She discovered me in the concealment La Voisin had devised in case, sweet, of unexpected entrance. Her friendship suited me better than her

enmity, but Satan, her master, inspired her with passion for me. To elude her arts, I swore on the crucifix to wed her on the Marquis's death. I saved him this afternoon from the flowers she had prepared; before another effort, the birds will have flown! How camest into her snare?"

Trembling, Diane told him. At mention of the Hôtel Dieu, St. Croix smiled grimly.

"Madame is an angel—of death. It has overtaken many poor wretches through her white hands. My life, this night must see our flight; wilt tarry in the chapel for me? I have a key to the courtyard gate."

Turn, St. Croix, see the pale eyes gleaming through the hangings, the picking hands busy with the red rosary.

"I will wait," the girl stammered. With a last kiss, the man vanished, to prepare for flight. In the gloom the shadow also shifted, stealing from the chamber.

Waiting in terror, Mademoiselle de Verneuil scarcely noted an increasing scurry in the house, till Madame de Brinvilliers' voice brought her wildly to her feet.

"My friend, the Marquis sinks! the apothecary tarries! I fly to hasten him. Make prayer for us!"

Fearful of suspicion, the girl accepted the familiar rosary, which Madame, her hands in Spanish gauntlets, snatched from her own girdle. The beads slid through the slender fingers.

"*Ave Maria, ora pro nobis!*"

"*Ave Maria, ora pro nobis!*"

"*Ave Maria, ora——*"

Pray for souls weltering in death, Mary Mother. The cold flood rises to the breast, the chin, the lips. With a sigh, Diane de Verneuil sank forward.

As the white form ceased to quiver, the Marquise crept upon it. Raising the girl with unexpected strength, she bore her towards the chapel, the firesparks flickered in her eyes, as she knelt her burden against the altar step.

"She keeps tryst, M. de St. Croix," said the Marquise de Brinvilliers.

The click of the secret panel closing behind the murderess reached St. Croix's ears. At news of Brinvilliers' relapse, his involuntary rival had rushed to the laboratory, preparing a fresh antidote. Not pausing to remove the glass mask worn to avoid the poison fumes, he seized the preparation. The altar revolved noiselessly.

"Sweetheart, already waiting?"

His hand caressed the gold hair, but the kneeling figure knelt on. The rosary, clasped in stiffening fingers, hung like drops of blood over her heart.

"Diane!"

Stung by fear, St. Croix caught her, bearing her into the hidden chamber. The crucible's red glow fell upon the dead face. With a terrible cry the lover reeled, shattering his mask against the iron brazier. Overbalancing, he fell prone upon Diane, his lips against the rosary. Once, twice he writhed, then lay, the scarlet chaplet linking him with the girl in death.

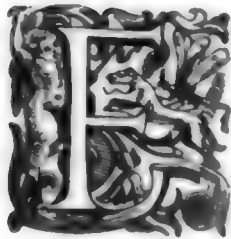
Without, in the darkness, lurked Nemesis, gibbet arms outstretched, tarrying the poisoner Brinvilliers.



Where Folly is God*

SNAP SHOTS AT THE NICE CARNIVAL

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS.



FOR twelve days in February, Nice, the clean, pleasant town of violets and mimosa, of confetti and pretty women, runs mad with gaiety. Nowhere else in all the world

is there such wholesome irresponsible fun and frolic as in its streets during Carnival: nowhere are the people so good-humoured, or are the guardians of the public peace so forbearing. While in England there are snows and fogs, rain and damp, on the Riviera flowers bloom everywhere, the sky is a cloudless vault of blue, the sun so powerful that straw hats and sunshades are indispensable, and the Mediterranean, ever-changing, is at mid-day of that ultramarine hue familiar to us all in pictures. The bright air, exhilarating as champagne, imparts to one and all a capacity to enjoy the fun to the utmost.

Of the thousands of health resorts in Europe, Nice is the brightest, the merriest and the best. The sight of unfortunate invalids does not oppress the senses of those in search of sunshine as at Mentone or at Cannes, the *demi-monde* is not so much in evidence as it is at Monte Carlo, and the tourist element—that bugbear of those who “spend the season” at any popular resort—is well-balanced by the numbers who arrive in Nice each November, and remain till April. The centre of all that is bright and pleasant on the “blue coast,” the centre of fashion of social life, and of entertainment, Nice stands unique,

with its magnificent Promenade des Anglais, one of the finest sea-fronts in the world, as the most brilliant and the most cheerful of any winter city in the world.

But it is this year's Carnival which may possibly interest readers of the LUDGATE most of all. Last year's fêtes were somewhat marred on account of the inartistic colours chosen by the Committee—namely, red and rose—as the hues of the dominoes and fancy dresses; but this year the two most delicate and beautiful of all tints were insisted upon, that of *vert d'eau* in combination with pale mauve. For weeks prior to Carnival all the dainty *magasins* in the Place Masséna, the Quai St. Jean Baptiste, and the Avenue de la Gare were, of course, overflowing with dresses of these hues, mostly of the *pierrot* and *bébé* type; those forbidding black velvet masks which the French know as *louis*, wire masks to protect the face from the hard confetti, and little tin scoops by which the dusty missiles are projected on those two Sunday afternoons when in the streets the battle becomes so general. King Carnival is a colossal figure, each year representing some fresh character. Last season he was a villager, in white hat and decked out in his holiday ribbons; but this year he was a fashionable young man, with merry face and wondrous moustaches, ready for a ball, in scarlet coat and black satin breeches, seated in a motor-car, decorated in Louis XV. style with pale blue and gold, and when, heralded by the brazen bands and torches, he made his entry into Nice

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this year, on the night of February 10th, the multitudes who hailed him declared that he was the finest fellow who had presided over the festivities for the past fifteen years. He certainly was a striking figure, and his wife too was a quaint conception; balancing herself upon a swing held by two gigantic lackeys, and wearing a fearful and wonderful feat of millinery. Little, however, can be seen of the Carnival Procession at night, amid that fan-fare of trumpets, the glare of coloured fires, and the blaze of the flambeaux, therefore, it is on the

home would hold up their hands horrified at spending a Sunday afternoon in such a manner, proving themselves, as they always do, victors in a fight, while up and down the town the procession paraded, a truly amusing sight and decidedly novel to those who witnessed it for the first time.

Many of the cars and the maskers were amusing. The former were mostly mechanical, for example, one called "The Gargantuan Infant" was an immense baby, who took up live nursemaids and swallowed them. Another,



KING CARNIVAL HEADS THE PROCESSION

following Sunday afternoon when all Nice goes forth to the Place Masséna to witness the first Corse Carnavalesque.

This year it was exceptionally good, as may be gathered from the snap-shot photographs by M. Giletta, of Nice, which I am here enabled to reproduce.

The battle of paper confetti which takes place simultaneously with the procession, between the hours of two and five, was more fiercely contested than usual, and the streets were crowded by thousands, half of whom were in masks and dominoes, the staid English, who at

called "Père Fouettard," was that terrible person invoked by irate French parents to frighten their unruly offspring, and this ogre of the fairy tale whipped the hundred naughty children about him as the car proceeded. That representing the "Moulin de la Galette" was the red windmill on the Montmartre heights, to which English visitors to Paris go surreptitiously in order to witness the much-talked-of can-can, while another quaint design was "The Exhibition of 1900," showing the aspect of the moon at one metre's dis-

tance, with its inhabitants treated humorously of course. Among the cars were the usual cavalcades, analcades, and groups of maskers on foot. A pretty mounted group was of spiders and flies, and another "The Knights of the Sun or Sunflower," a number of men on donkeys dressed in rose and white carrying revolving suns, while a third, called "Light or Dark," was an allusion to the light or dark beer so universally consumed in the cafés. "Printed Pages" was a noticeable group. The pages were dressed in

boots polished. In remembrance of poor Max Lebaudy, the reckless young millionaire, I suppose, the Committee designated as "Les Petits Sucriers" the group of young exquisites who sat on high stools drinking champagne in honour of the God of Folly. French humour found vent in a company of grenadiers imprisoned in a "grenade" (pomegranate), in "Rum-y-o and Juliette" in the shape of a walking bottle of rum, in an itinerant newsvendor with a duck's head, who was "selling canards," in a drummer who had "burst his



MADAME CARNIVAL AND HER ATTENDANTS

printed papers, and had hats shaped like inkpots. A well-known French novelist who accompanied me, and who fought by my side long and well in the confetti battle, made a joke which I dare here to repeat. He remarked that this group of "Printed Pages" would produce an impression, and was instantly rewarded by a handful of confetti being flung into his face by the writer of these lines. Another group was called "Cirez M'sieur," a number of those youths who torment the long-suffering visitor with their incessant invitations to have their

skin," and in dozens of others equally witty and well carried out.

For three hours this wonderful procession of highly-finished cars paraded the town to the accompaniment of the most execrable music possible to conceive. Carnival music is never very choice, but on this occasion I noticed on one car three bands all playing different tunes! Afoot in the streets there was life and excitement everywhere. One met one's friends and either smothered them with confetti, or enveloped them in those irritating long strips of coloured paper



THE CARNIVAL PROCESSION

called serpentines. One man, an Englishman, had the foolhardiness to venture out in a tall silk hat, whereupon it was immediately hooked by a serpentine at the corner of the Rue de France, flung off, and the last I saw of that shiny head-gear it was in the road with an urchin dancing gleefully upon it. Its angry owner endeavoured to rescue it, but was set upon by at least fifty persons armed with confetti, and was compelled to beat a hasty retreat. Silk hats must not be worn at Carnival.

At five o'clock King Carnival was returned to his triumphal temple in the Place Masséna, there to enjoy his brief but merry reign, and on the following Thursday there was fought along the Promenade des Anglais the first of the battles of Flowers, those world-famed encounters wherein foreign princes, grand-dukes, ladies of *grande marque*, and English society bombard each other with bouquets in the brilliant sunshine. It is indeed a pretty scene, one which has often been described, but the charm of which increases each time it is witnessed.

On the following Sunday was held

the battle of hard confetti—the most unpleasant part of Carnival. To put it plainly, this battle resolves itself into the mere throwing of dirt into each other's faces, for the confetti consists of lime-like pellets, which on breaking crumble to powder. Hence to go out without a wire mask is a very dangerous proceeding. The battle was, however, but a repetition of the previous Sunday. In the evening there was held one of the chief events of Carnival, the grand *redoute*, or masked ball, at the Casino. This year I found it a madly gay function, dresses of sea-green and mauve only being admitted, and every one being masked the fun was fast and furious. Pierrot and Pierrette, clown and columbine, men with hideous noses and enormous heads, short-skirted girls in "baby" dominoes with pretty hoods, some girls as clowns, and others as the evergreen Sappho, danced and made merry the whole night through, sometimes, be it said, with a *verve* agility of movement and display of *lingerie* which would have caused the votaries of Mrs. Chant to exhibit their palms in horror and astonishment. But Carnival is

Carnival, and in Nice during the reign of folly all is merry and the fun is always harmless. The other events of the remaining days were repetitions of those already mentioned, therefore it is needless to refer to them.

Amid those bright surroundings, in that balmy air of premature spring, where all is so careless and gay, the delightful irresponsibility of Carnival at Nice serves to rejuvenate and to amuse. There is in the air a spirit of frolic that is contagious, and to enter into the folly of that twelve days of merriment is to be young again, to re-taste the delights

which passed with our youth, and to enjoy with the easy-going, lighthearted Niçois their annual holiday, when their town is given over to wild revelry. In Carnival there is nothing to offend and nothing to condemn—except perhaps the use of hard confetti as dangerous.

It is the brightest week in the Riviera season, for the gun which booms forth from the château, announcing the burning of the colossal King on the night of Mardi-Gras, also announces that the season has passed its zenith and will soon be at an end.



THE BATTLE OF FLOWERS

An Old-Time Prison

WRITTEN BY FRANK HIRD. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



HIDDEN away in an East-end square, the architecture of whose houses is eloquent of the domestic tastes of another and an older time, is a prison which was formerly as well-known and even more dreaded by malefactors and criminals than Newgate. The exterior of this prison, which is officially known as "The Liberty of her Majesty's Tower and the Precincts thereof," looks like a sombre private dwelling-house, with a heavy portico. But the ground floor windows of the building that stands in Wellclose Square, E., at the corner of Neptune Street, gave light to a Court-house panelled with wood from floor to ceiling, its judge having the powers of life and death. At the end of this room is a raised desk, in the centre of which stood a vast and high chair, upon which the judge sat; on either side of him were the Assessors; below is the seat of the Clerk of the Court, and on the right-hand a wooden pen, where the prisoners to be tried were placed *en masse*. On the left-hand is the jury box, and in the centre of the Court, facing the judge's seat, is the witness box, a railing behind marking off the portion of the room reserved for the public, whilst on either side of the green baize-covered table in the well of the Court are seats that were once occupied daily by the brethren of the law. Behind the great judge's chair is a recess, lined with fluted cloth, and it was the custom when capital sentence was about to be pronounced for the chair to be moved backwards into this recess, so

that the judge, donning the black cap, might fulminate his fatal decree directly under the Royal arms that hung above him. At the present moment the Court-house and prison stand within the boundaries of five parishes. In the old days its jurisdiction ran in the Royal Palace and Fortress, as the Tower was called, the Precinct of the Tower without, the Precinct of the Liberty of the old Artillery Ground, the Precinct of Holy Trinity, Minorities, and the Precinct of Wellclose. The "Liberty," as it was termed, had a separate jurisdiction for Quarter Sessions, and was a county by itself. But gradually its power was taken away from this Court in Wellclose Square, and by Acts of the three last sovereigns its criminal jurisdiction was abolished, until finally its remaining privileges of granting dancing and music licenses were transferred to the County Council, and three years ago business of any kind ceased to be conducted there. Then the Court-house and prison were sold, but happily the buildings fell into the hands of the proprietor of the neighbouring inn, the "King's Arms," whose appreciation of the historical has led him to preserve the old cells exactly as they were when they came to him, together with the rest of this interesting building.

From a broad passage outside the Court a superb staircase with a wide balustrade and carved banisters leads to a large board-room, in which stands a long narrow table surrounded by slender wooden armchairs, left exactly as when last used. The five windows

of this room look upon the garden of the square, which is filled with fine trees, and must at one time have been beautiful ; its centre is now occupied by a school, but sufficient open space remains to indicate its appearance when Well-close Square was a word of horror to criminals.

The space between the Court-house and the cells is occupied by the public-house, the "King's Arms," which was

originally started as a luncheon-bar for the benefit of the judge and counsel, and at the bottom of the backyard of the inn is a low stone arch which leads by a steep staircase to the two cells above. Beyond a high wall which now encloses the back premises of the "King's Arms" used to be the exercising yard, a bricked-up doorway at the foot of the staircase showing where it was entered by the prisoners.



EXTERIOR OF COURT HOUSE

No wonder Wellclose Square possessed an evil reputation, for its two cells, standing just as they were left by the last prisoners, are sufficient to terrify the most experienced and hardened offender. Standing side by side, the further of the two cells, which was occupied solely by criminals condemned to death, can only be reached by passing through the first cell. But both, in their comfortlessness and general appear-

ance, are similar. Each has a strongly-barred window, placed so high on the wall that only a glimpse of the sky could be obtained by the prisoners within, and each has a sloping platform at the end opposite to the window, which served as a bed. In the first cell, given up to ordinary evil-doers, there formerly stood some stocks, but these have disappeared. By an ingenious arrangement a shutter can be placed over these



JUDGE'S CHAIR



THE CONDEMNED CELL

windows so as to exclude all light, and permitting of only sufficient ventilation to enable the unfortunate prisoners condemned to "solitary confinement" to breathe. In the old times a sentence of "solitary confinement" meant that the unhappy wight must expiate his wrong-doing by remaining in total darkness. Sometimes he was chained to the floor by manacles round his ankles,

or by the chains attached to the back of the strait-waistcoat which is shown in our photograph, according to the seriousness of his crime; but chained or unchained he passed his days and nights in Stygian darkness, the visits of the warder with food being his sole means of marking the passage of time. As the cells are only built of wood they must have been bitterly cold in winter and



ENTRANCE DOOR OF CELLS FROM STAIRCASE



HANDCUFFS AND ANKLE-CHAINS

hot in the summer, and the crowding of prisoners, that was one of the greatest evils of the old prison system, must have added untold horrors to the miseries of the incarcerated. As many as twenty people are said to have been confined at one time in the condemned cell, amongst others the redoubtable Dick Turpin. A broken plank in the floor is shown as evidence of an attempt he made to escape, but as he was executed at York, his presence in the condemned cell at Wellclose Square is more than questionable. The residence there, however, of other famous criminals is proved by

the inscriptions upon the wooden walls, that have recently been made clearer by the removal of the whitewash with which they were covered. Among these is the name of John Burke the plasterer, of body-snatching celebrity, and, evidently cut by the same hand, those of Edward Stockley, Thomas Lynel, and James Parkis, who were all confined under sentence of death at the same time. These inscriptions, in many places almost defaced, are innumerable, and are eloquent of the painstaking of the prisoners, since they were all cut with the prongs of a wooden fork.

"Pray remember the poor departed," in close proximity to the crude drawing of a gallows, has a significance that is not without pathos, and the following lines, carved on the wall of the first cell—

*The cupboard is empty
To our sorrow,
But we hope it will
Be full to-morrow,*

were, in all probability, cut by the trembling hand of a poor wretch who was starved to death by the negligence of the warders. Firmly fastened to the wall of the condemned cell are the strait-waistcoat and wrist and ankle chains with which malefactors were formerly manacled. The chains must have been extremely painful, and the waistcoat, of coarse canvas, with two iron chains attached to the back, suggests a torture so unbearable that even the most staunch acclamer of the "good old times" would find it difficult to repress a shudder at the suggestions of suffering it conveys so eloquently.

For centuries this prison was known as "The Sly House," and this name has descended to the "King's Arms," having originally been gained by the fact that prisoners, after being condemned to death in the Court-house, were never seen again until they faced the gallows upon Tower Hill. A second bricked-up doorway beneath the staircase leading to the cells is pointed out as the opening of an underground passage that ran to

the Tower, through which the condemned were taken to execution; but as the opening in or near the ancient fortress has not yet been discovered, it is impossible to speak with any certainty as to the truth of this statement. The popular name for the prison, however, still remains, and the bricked-up doorway, at any rate, affords a reasonable explanation of its bestowal.

A massive oaken door clamped with iron gives access to the first cell from the staircase, a barred trap in its centre enabling the warder to keep a watch upon the prisoners within; but despite this precaution attempts at escape were numerous, and on one occasion two men succeeded in making a hole through the floor sufficiently large to enable them to get through. Unfortunately for them the floors of the cells were immediately over the old guardroom, so that they literally fell from the frying-pan into the fire.

The old Court-house, with its fine woodwork, its judge's chair, and the old jury-ballot box—in which twenty-four names used to be placed on separate slips of paper, the men elected to serve being the first twelve whose names were taken out after the box had been turned twelve times—will probably be turned into an auction-room, but the two cells will be carefully preserved, and will serve as an interesting and instructive memorial of the prison system of the old days.



Boy Singers for the Church

WRITTEN BY FREDERICK DOLMAN



ALL readers of Mrs. Henry Wood's novel "The Channings"—which first appeared, by the way, in the pages of "The Quiver"—will remember the suggestive picture it contains of the lot of the boy choristers in the cathedral of "Helstonleigh." That picture is largely true of the boy choristers of to-day, but since "The Channings" was published a more liberal provision has been made for the employment of their fresh young voices in the cathedrals, and in many churches as well. When Mrs. Henry Wood wrote her charming story, there was probably no boys' choir in the country so large or well trained as are now those of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, Canterbury Cathedral and York Minster, and of such historic places of worship as the Chapel Royal, St. James's, St. George's, Windsor, and the Temple Church.

Unlike the choristers of "Helstonleigh" the boy singers of St. Paul's and the Abbey reside in boarding schools, which have been built for the purpose by the Dean and Chapter who, for the time being, are practically in *loco parentis* to them. St. Paul's has the largest boys' choir; the school-house which was built a few years ago in Dean's Court, between Cannon Street and the river, has forty scholars. The Abbey has but half the number, the boys residing in a comparatively new building in Little Smith Street, Westminster. Besides the resident scholars there are a number of probationers who come to the school every day for their musical and general education, and take the places of the choristers as their voices break. Before

probationers are admitted into the choir, their parents or guardians have to enter into an agreement with the ecclesiastical authorities, undertaking not to remove a boy until his voice breaks. As security for the fulfilment of this agreement, the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's require a deposit of £20 which is returned in full when the boy leaves the choir with their sanction. On the other hand, the boys receive an excellent musical and a good general education, with comfortable board and lodging, free of all charge to their parents for the whole term of their membership of the choir. At Westminster, however, this is the case with only twelve out of the twenty resident boys; the parents of the other eight are required to contribute £10 per year towards their board and education for the first two years. On these terms there is never any lack of applications for admission to the choirs; and as a rule Dr. Bridge, the organist at Westminster Abbey, and Dr. Martin, organist at St. Paul's Cathedral, have a good list of the names of children whose parents hope and believe that they will be found qualified to fill vacancies as they occur.

It goes without saying that the possession of a good voice is the all-important qualification. At Westminster Abbey, indeed, nothing more than this, together with a knowledge of "the rudiments of music" and the ability to pass a "strict medical examination," is absolutely required, although it may be added that "candidates are expected to read and write fairly." The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's have, presumably, been enabled to be more exacting by the greater competition for places in the Cathedral choir. At any rate, candidates have to pass an examination in elementary

Latin, the Church Catechism and Scripture History, as well as the three R's, before being presented to Dr. Martin to have their musical ear and voice tested. As the result, the boys, I am told, are less "mixed" in class, being mostly the sons of clergymen, doctors, and other professional men. It may well be that the choir school of St. Paul's proves exceptionally attractive, having regard to the scholarships with which it has been endowed by some of the City Companies. Besides these scholarships for the continuance of their education when they leave the choir—which are of the value of £30 and £40 per year and tenable from one to four years—the Dean and Chapter have a fund out of which they are able to assist "old boys" in going to the University.

Both the choir schools, as may be supposed, are somewhat "cabined, cribbed and confined" in consequence of the great ground value. The case is even worse in the City than at Westminster, the St. Paul's boys having their playground on the roof. The school-rooms and dormitories are as pleasant and comfortable, however, as those of a good public school, and well provided with books and pictures. The library at Westminster was entirely given by friends of the Dean, including more than one member of the Royal Family. Among the pictures on the walls are several presents from the late Dean Stanley; his portrait hangs in the recreation room and has in his handwriting the words:—"The highest learning is to be wise, and the highest wisdom to be good." There are also interesting souvenirs of red-letter days in the annals of the choir, such as that of the service in celebration of the Queen's Jubilee. Having been recently rebuilt on the south side of Little Smith Street to make room for the Church House, which now occupies its old site, the Choir House is above criticism from the hygienic point of view. Such is the care, too, taken of the health of St. Paul's boys, that for the last twenty years, at least, the choir has never lost a member through death. There is one half holiday a week, usually spent in

athletic exercise, unless a boy wishes to visit his home. The Westminster boys have the privilege of playing football in the winter on the adjacent ground of Westminster School, whilst in summer time they go by boat to Battersea Park for a game of cricket. St. Paul's boys have been provided with a playing-field of their own in one of the suburbs. There are holidays of some weeks at Christmas, Easter and in the summer, but the boys have to attend at the Abbey and the Cathedral for the Sunday services. In fact, with the numerous services and constant exercises supplementing an ordinary school routine, it is evident that the choir boys have to lead laborious lives, and scorn many delights natural to their age. But almost invariably enthusiastic lovers of music, the labour is in itself a pleasure; and "old boys" of the Cathedral, like Sir John Stainer and Henry Gadsby, the composers, and of the Abbey, like Edward Lloyd, the eminent tenor, and W. S. Penley, the equally eminent comedian, cherish the pleasantest memories of the years they spent in their surplices.

The choir at the Temple Church numbers but sixteen boys, of whom four rank as "probationers." During the long tenure of office, however, of Dr. E. J. Hopkins, as organist and choirmaster, and with the liberal provision which the Benchers of the Middle Temple and the Inner Temple make for the music of the church, it has obtained a national reputation, and to this result the boys' voices have certainly contributed not a little. The choir was established in 1842, on the old church being reopened, and Dr. Hopkins received his appointment the following year. Originally there were but eight choir-boys, Dr. Hopkins increasing this number at first to ten, and then to twelve. The Benchers provide for their education by paying their fees at King's College, which is so conveniently situated in proximity to the church. On leaving the college at 3 p.m., they proceed to the church for an hour or an hour and a half's instruction by Dr. Hopkins in the music to be given on the following Sunday. As they have only one service to attend on Sunday morning, the remuneration of these boys must be considered very

generous. Besides an excellent free education, they receive salaries reaching to £20 per annum. During Term time, the church is attended by a congregation which includes many distinguished men, and a number of people with fastidious musical tastes, and doubtless a high degree of excellence has to be exacted and maintained. But with the beginning of the legal vacation in August, the church is closed, and for two months the choir has a holiday. In the circumstances, it is only natural that there should be keen competition for vacancies in the choir. Dr. Hopkins once ventured to advertise for a boy chorister, with the result that the church was besieged by a horde of boys of all sorts and conditions. A good number of the choristers have been sons of clerks to judges and barristers. Mr. W. H. Cummings, the distinguished principal of the Guildhall School of Music, was one of Dr. Hopkins' "old boys," and a short time ago he was called upon by another who had risen to a leading position in Australia.

Every visitor to the Chapels Royal of St. James's, London, or St. George's, Windsor, must have a pleasant recollection of the singing of the boys' choir. The twenty-four boys at Windsor are trained for their choral work by Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the Queen's Music, and have their general education carried on at a school specially organised and managed for that purpose by the Dean and Canons of Windsor. Half the choristers hold scholarships which reduce the cost of their board and residence at St. George's School to £18 per annum; the others pay fees amounting to £58 per annum. They all come, I believe, from the higher classes of society, the sons of people to whom the social prestige of singing before the Queen is possibly of greater importance than economy in educational expenses. The school is designed to prepare the boys to enter with credit one of the public schools, when, on the break in their voices, they leave Windsor. Against parents withdrawing their sons before this occurs, the Dean and Canons have no legal guarantee, but they make it clear that when this is done capriciously, it is a breach of an honor-

able undertaking. The boys who hold the choral scholarships take it in turn to sing a solo in the private Chapel of Her Majesty during the time that the Court is in residence at the Castle. "A correct ear and a good voice," it is stated, "are indispensable in candidates for a choristership, and as to knowledge of music, it will be expected that every candidate shall know his notes. Good reading, clear articulation and correct pronunciation are essential. No boy who stammers, lisps, or has difficulty in the utterance of any particular letter or syllable should apply for a choristership." So numerous are the well-qualified candidates for the choir, that Sir Walter Parratt has no difficulty in enforcing these requirements calculated to maintain its high excellence.

At York and Canterbury the lot of the boy choristers is much the same. In both York and Canterbury they live at home with their parents, but whilst the York boys have the advantage of attending Archbishop Holgate's School, those of Canterbury receive their education in a choir school, which, according to all accounts, is not of so high a standard. Dr. Longhurst, the organist and choir-master at Canterbury, complains, indeed, that he loses some of his best voices, because of the parents' anxiety to obtain a better education for their children. Besides free tuition, the boy choristers of Canterbury and York receive salaries which range from £1 to £12 per annum. When vacancies occur, and the organist has made his choice of the applicants, the Dean has an interview with the boys and their parents, and gives them a short address as to the educational privileges of the choristers, the need of punctuality, diligence, and reverence on their part, and the importance, on the part of the parents, of supporting the discipline of the school. The boys are first admitted as probationers, and until fresh choristers are needed take no part in the services, although required to attend the Minster every afternoon, when they wear black gowns, walk in the procession, and sit in front of the choir. At York their admission as choristers takes place at a special service in the Lady Chapel. Their surplices are then

put on for the first time, and they are presented with specially-bound copies of the Bible and Prayer Book for use in the Minster, and these they retain on leaving the choir. The eight senior boys wear badges round their necks, in memory of the late Dean Duncombe, to whom the choristers owe their educational advantages at Archbishop Holgate's School. It was as a memorial

to the Dean that a fund was raised, whose income is now devoted to the education of the boys. When a boy leaves the choir (unless it should be for misconduct), he is "dismissed" at a service similar to that which signalled his admission, and on this occasion he receives a Biblical Concordance as another souvenir of his years as a chorister.

IN MAY.

Be glad, my dear, be glad!

The Spring and the Summer could not delay,
But met and mingled and made this May!

And how shall a heart be sad

When the youngest daisy looks up to pray,
"Be glad, my dear, be glad!"

Be glad, my dear, be glad!

There is more than flower on the hawthorn spray,
There is more than warmth in the sunny ray,

And the mavis is *not* gone mad.

Oh, surely God made the world in May,
The beautiful world that calls to-day,
"Be glad, my dear, be glad!"

Be glad, my dear, be glad!

'Tis a lover's wish in a lover's way—

You have heard. Will *you* not look up and say,
"Be glad, my dear, be glad!"

J. J. BELL.



A FLASH of GENIUS



WRITTEN BY J. A. FLYNN



WE were staying at the foot of the Alps when Dormer first avowed his poetic aspirations. It was after a generous dinner, when we were smoking on the balcony and watching the snowy caps of the mountains standing out against the blue sky. So I charitably supposed that the phantasy of the place had recalled some youthful indiscretions. Dormer was the sort of man who couldn't possibly write poetry.

When we had gone on to Venice, however, he recurred to the subject, and I felt bound to remonstrate with him.

"My dear fellow," I said, "you don't mean to tell me that you write poetry at your time of life!" He was fifty-one, and old at that.

He toyed with the big ring on his finger—the sort of ring which couldn't speak more plainly if it were labelled "Retired from Trade."

"If a man," he said slowly, "has poetry in him it will come out, whether it's poor stuff or good. Mine is rather poor, so I don't inflict it upon other people. But there it is."

"Where?" I enquired anxiously.

"At home; in books—manuscripts."

"How many?" I was glad they were at home.

"Eight or nine," he confessed. "They're not *very* big, you know; about a couple of hundred folio pages apiece." He writes a small hand.

I blew smoke rings rapidly. It is an excellent way to keep from laughing. The idea of a man who had made his fortune in 13s. trousers—two pairs for 25s.—writing poetry was sufficiently absurd, even if he hadn't been Dormer!

"Well—er—if it amuses you—" I said doubtfully, "I don't see that there's any harm in it." His eyes flashed.

"Harm!" he cried. "Harm! If I were asked what kept me straight at any time in my life when I was tempted to go crooked—God knows there have been plenty!—I should point to one of those poems. There isn't a time when I've been very glad or very sorry that isn't represented by one."

"I see," I said hastily. But I didn't.

"What I mean," he explained, "is that a man can't defend anything bad or shabby in poetry. If he's doubtful what he ought to do, let him go and write verses about it, and follow his poetry." His plain face was lit with enthusiasm.

"Upon my word," I admitted, "there's a lot in what you say. I've

never looked at it like that before. But in your case I don't believe the remedy was necessary." A straighter or kinder little fellow never lived!

"Sometimes I go over them on Sundays," he continued absently, "when my asthma's too bad to let me go out, and say to myself, 'This is what kept me from hardness,' or 'This saved me from drink,' or 'This was when mother died,' or 'This kept me to my work,' or 'This is when I made up my mind—er—'"

"To sell two pairs for 25s.?" I suggested.

Dormer drew himself up with an air of dignity, which scarcely becomes him. "I am somewhat used to being laughed at, Morton; but—"

"My dear fellow," I interrupted hastily, "I'm sure I beg your pardon for chaffing. I understood you to say that the—er—poems, were a sort of autobiography."

"Not in *that* sense," he explained. "Of course I know what was happening when I wrote them, but I don't put it in the verses always. Business is business with me, and poetry is poetry."

"Certainly," I assented. "Most poetry *isn't*, don't you know."

"For example," he went on, "when I was worrying out that business about the discount, I wrote a poem—a sonnet it was—'On the Nobility of Effort.' But it wouldn't suggest the shop to anyone, you see."

"Of course not," I agreed. I didn't know what to say to this good little extailor, who was paying me so generously as guide and polite instructor on his Continental tour.

"In short," he said, "a man doesn't put his trade, but what he feels and thinks, into poetry."

"Quite so."

"It isn't even *how* he puts it," he continued, emphatically, "or whether he says it before other people, or says it better, that makes a man a poet. It is how he feels, and what he thinks."

"So that a man may be a poet, although he cannot write poetry!"

"That's just what I mean—though I couldn't have put it so neatly. Just what I mean." He walked up and down the room excitedly. "Though,

of course, it is the grandest thing of all to say a new thing, and to say it beautifully. Ah!" He looked out of the open window thoughtfully, and shook his head. "I have sometimes thought—you know what I mean?"

I lit a fresh cigar from the stump of the old one, whilst I considered my reply.

"Yes," I said at last, "I know what you mean. I've felt the same sort of thing myself. I suppose most of us have felt it. As we grow older and wiser we abandon the idea. 'Pon my word, it's the only sensible thing to do."

"But you write verses sometimes," he objected. "I do a little writing for periodicals and magazines, you know."

"Ah! verses! they're quite another thing. I don't mean them seriously—don't mean anyone to take them seriously." No one does! "They're merely half a page of a tale."

"Don't you *ever* try to make them real poetry?" He looked at me reproachfully.

"Ye-es. Once in a way." I felt horribly guilty. "But—" I brightened up—"if I do the editor always sends them back."

"Perhaps," he suggested, "they are not serious enough."

"They are not the real thing. That's what's the matter. I can see it myself, about a month after I've written them." That's the truth also, you know.

He lit his pipe and smoked in silence for full ten minutes. Then he proposed a moonlight gondola trip, and we chartered one of those funereal vessels accordingly. It was not until our final smoke before going to bed that he recurred to the subject.

"Don't you think, Morton," he asked, "if you took the best of your serious poems, and kept revising it every month or so, you might make it first-rate at last?"

"No," said I, "I do not." He shook his head.

"I know most of my verses lack the—divine fire, you know." He laughed uneasily. "But I am vain enough to believe that I once had a real flash of genius. I've been at that poem, Morton, for twenty-three years. By the time I've finished revising it I trust it will be

something to be remembered by—something to make people pause and *think*." His pale cheeks flushed and his eyes flashed.

"After twenty-three years' revision there must be very little of the original left?" I hazarded.

"Not a whole line!" he said, rubbing his hands delightedly.

"May I ask the subject?"

"The subject is a man whose mind is full of fine things that he can't say—a poet who can't write poetry, as you said."

"Well, you see, I had only used her as an example of the—the beautiful. I just cut out two or three verses and altered a few of the allusions—made it general instead of particular."

"Generality is apt to be cold," I suggested, seeing that he wanted help in the conversation.

"That was what I felt. After a time I altered it back to the particular—Mary instead of Belinda. But——" He paused suddenly.

"Another lucky escape?"

"She died," he said, very quietly. He



"I USED TO READ THE POEM TO HER"

"Ah! I see."

"When I wrote it first"—there was a ring in his voice as when one speaks of the beloved—"I called it *To Belinda*."

"Which was her name?"

"In a way. Her name was Martha, really; but they called her Belle."

"You still think of her?" I enquired, sympathetically. You see I have been in love a good many times myself.

"Not in that way." He smiled. "I had a lucky escape, though I didn't think so at the time. Why, I wrote a poem—but that's neither here nor there. I was thankful that it wasn't here."

"So you eliminated Belinda?"

walked over to the window, drew up the blind, and looked out at the moonlight waters. After a minute of awkward silence I followed him and put my hand on his shoulder.

"I say, old chap—I'm deuced sorry, don't you know." He wrung my hand. "We won't talk about it any more to-night."

"I should like to talk about it, my dear fellow, if you don't mind," said he. "She was ailing for a long time—consumption—and I used to read the—the poem to her. She was very interested in it; and very proud that it was partly about her."

"You didn't tell her about Belinda, I suppose?"

"Well—no! You see it couldn't have done any good, and it might have worried her. Women are very curious creatures, don't you think?"

"Very. Of course they are."

"You wouldn't have told her, would you?"

"Not a word. Of course I shouldn't."

"You've no idea what a lot she thought of that poem—*her* poem, she called it." He paused chokingly.

"She naturally would."

"The night before she died she was talking to me and laughing. No one would have thought that she was dying." He gulped down something in his throat. "She put her hand on my arm suddenly, and said, 'Tom, I want you to promise me three things.' So I promised. The first two don't matter—unless you would like to know?"

"If you do not mind," I said. One doesn't know what to say sometimes.

"First she made me promise to take care of myself."

"I'm afraid you haven't." His asthma was largely due to visiting his poor clients in the rain and fog, the doctors told me.

"Oh, well, a man can't be always coddling himself. Next she said, 'Tom, I hope that you will find some one else when I'm gone'—I never shall—'some-one very nice, who will make you grow to like her more even than you like me now. But I want you to remember that I should have made you like me more and more, too, if I had lived. Promise!' And I promised." He stopped to regain his voice.

"She must have been very nice," I said with conviction.

"She was. Well, then, she made me promise—what do you think?"

"To go on with the poem?"

"Yes; and to remember always that it was hers. I remember." His voice was soft and strong. If he had been a fine-looking man he would have been wonderfully impressive at the moment.

During the rest of the tour we only referred to the verses once or twice, and then very briefly. But as we neared

Victoria Station, on the road home, I recurred to the subject.

"You have been awfully kind to me, Dormer," I said. "I thought I should be a kind of superior servant, and only came because I wanted the money badly, you know. But I have found a friend, and had a grand holiday."

"My dear Morton," he answered, "it has been an education to me to travel with a real gentleman like you. Why, I am getting quite polished, and hardly feel afraid of society at all now." He laughed uneasily. It was a sore subject with him.

"Polished enough for me, and for the lady whose opinion I value most," I said warmly. "She and her brother will meet me at Victoria. Dear old Kate! If I may introduce you I shall be very proud."

"Will you?" His face lighted up. "And will you and she come to see me sometimes?"

"We shall very much like to. And, I say, old man, if I might look through your poetry I should be very glad."

I had been thinking for some days what I could do to please him most, but I never imagined the rapture with which he received this proposal. Before we reached town I had agreed to assist him in revising the poetry, on condition that he accepted my help as a friendly, gratuitous service, and I vowed mentally to polish some of it into a fit state for publication, if possible.

As we were running into the station he pressed an envelope into my hand.

"I was going to post it," he said hastily; "but I want you to see that it was sealed up before you made your generous offer." Then in the excitement of meeting Kate I forgot all about it for the moment. When she and I opened it a couple of hours later, we found two cheques—one for the balance of my salary; the other for £500, "as a small wedding present!"

Thanks to Dormer's gift we started house-keeping very comfortably; and my writings began to go off ever so much better. You see I felt fit for anything now that I had Kate to help me. So we got along capitally, and my only trouble was that Dormer was too ill to come to the wedding, though he sent some splendid

jewellery to my wife. A few months after he went to the South of France, and there he died. They telegraphed for me, but I arrived just too late.

In his will he left me a legacy of no less than £10,000, coupled with a wish that all his writings were to be handed over to me for disposal at my absolute discretion. They filled a huge Gladstone bag, and when I got home Kate and I took them out reverently, and

we agreed to look through the book together, and to say nothing until we reached the end. So we sat side by side, holding hands, and opened the morocco cover.

There were about 1,000 lines, and we went on in silence until we had done a couple of hundred. Every line or so I bit my lip, and she quivered; and at last I closed the book softly and sadly, and shook my head; and Kate laid her



"WE AGREED TO LOOK THROUGH THE BOOK TOGETHER"

sorted them upon the table until we found *To Mary*.

"It seems almost desecration to look at it," said she, with her big eyes a little moist.

"There may be something in it, you see," I said, "something that we can touch up and publish in his name." Kate dabbles in verses like myself, and we often revise them together.

"Oh, I *do* hope so. We *would* take pains with it, wouldn't we, old boy?"

In order to form independent opinions

face upon the table and sobbed as if her heart would break.


"To think—" she cried—"Oh, Harry, to think that when he was so ill, and so unhappy, he built all his hopes on *that*!"

I laid my hand on her shoulder, and let her cry a bit before I said anything. And when I tried to speak I found I too had—that I was a little hoarse, I mean.

"Perhaps he'll get his reward in— in another way—little girl—don't you think?" I whispered; and she wiped her eyes and nodded.

An Afternoon in a Gold Mine

WRITTEN BY G. NICHOLAS

XTREMES meet." Certainly two rather dirty, dilapidated miners' coats and hats apparently had little in common with the two daintiest of dainty white muslin frocks that they covered, frills and fluffy laces looking fairy-like in their whiteness and lightness.

"Please will you put these on," said the miner-guide, as he handed the manly attire; "you might find it damp going down in the cage." We were standing by the shaft of a gold mine on one of the ridges overlooking Ballarat. It was the hottest of days, when the sun was shining as it only can shine over the lands nearer the Southern Cross—a temperature of 110 degrees in the shade! and 170 degrees in the elsewhere! A day when you can roast apples in the window, if you don't object to a style of cooking very like the proverbial Bridgnorth election—All on one side.

The Australians may boast as they like about their perfect climate; they have a happy way of forgetting the days when the scorching north winds blow hot from the sandy lands nearer the Equator, and make one feel more akin to a molten image than anything else.

On this particular occasion, my sister-in-law and I had gone up the hill, in the hope of finding a little cooler atmosphere than in the valley below, and there met a mine manager, who had promised to send us down to see the gold diggers. He suggested there was no time like the present, and we felt that certainly the lower regions could not be any warmer than up above, so decided to descend at once.

Equipped for the journey, we were then each presented with a lighted candle. What for, we never discovered, as they promptly went out and left us in Egyptian darkness directly the cage began to move. "What level?" asked the engineer.

"Fourth gallery—deep enough for ladies," shouted our companion to "the man at the wheel." Then we understood that we were only to descend 700 ft. (it was possible to be landed 1,800 ft., the depth to which Prince Albert Victor and Prince George went during their inspection). "Ready!" and down we shot like lightning. It was a record voyage as far as speed of locomotion went; but one did not feel nervous, for one knew that even if the stout rope or tackle could possibly break, the grappling forks at the sides of the cage, by the slightest movement of the lever grasped in the miner's hand, would firmly grip the sides of the shaft—by the way, steel ropes and chains of numerous kinds have been tried, but the most satisfactory of all things is a strong rope of Manilla yarn, though costing £80 each.

We stepped out into a wide gallery and proceeded 1,000 ft. into the interior, passing on the way various "billies" hanging on their pegs over primitive fire arrangements. Do you know what a "billy" is? It is not an irreverent nickname for Mr. Gladstone; it is not Dr. Jameson's hat; but it is the miner's larder, cash box, drinking cup, kettle, in fact, his *multum in parvo*—it is his covered can which in the morning carries his provisions for the day, and in which he boils his tea, and the deep cup-lid is his drinking vessel. Soon arriving at a hole—like a well with a windlass over—the miner-guide re-

quested that I should put my foot into a loop in the rope and hold tightly above. I laughed, "Oh dear no, I'm not such a brave boy as that!" was not exactly the refusal he expected. He assured us that nothing of the actual workings could be seen from above, and so we resolved to risk precious lives, and one by one were wound down to a further depth of 40 ft., and arrived in sight of a group of diggers. The remark that apparently it was easy work to find gold, led to the presentation of a light pick-axe, and on setting to work to loosen the quartz, I made considerable progress and learnt to follow a faint gold vein, a thin line called the indicator; it appears to run all round Ballarat, between the hills and the creek. It was not hard labour, for each stroke that brought down a portion of quartz, loosened the next. Several tiny scraps of gold kindly introduced themselves, and pulling away the surrounding quartz and "Black Jack," little points, shaped like atoms of coral showed out, and the manager was good enough to allow the keeping of findings. The workmen, now transformed to idlers, took the greatest interest in the white-robed miners, and as they were not paid by time, but by results, were not much richer that afternoon through the presence of lady diggers. In passing, one must remark on their gallantry.

Thinking that a great deal of our guide's time had been wasted, I offered him half-a-sovereign as a tip. This was politely but indignantly refused. "Thank you, madam; the honour of taking ladies down is sufficient, we do not want to be paid for doing so." Nothing now remained but to gather up one's treasures and begin the ascent; and, putting one foot into the rope, the up-signal was given. Either through carelessness or nervousness, the youth turning the windlass overwound an inch or two, and one's

fingers were crushed between the roller and the rope, before the miner-guide, who was carefully watching, had time to stop the youth, whom he most severely reprimanded. To let go would have been certain death, and very un-English to have made a fuss over it; but one would prefer that another time the youth did not so energetically follow in all things his country's motto, "Advance, Australia!" Back into air somewhat cooler, the usual evening breeze springing up. Cold nights are the one great blessing of Ballarat. After the hottest days there is always a wind at sundown, and one can seldom sleep in the very middle of summer under less than two blankets; it is so much more refreshing than the tropical enervating night of New South Wales. Victoria has also another advantage. Snakes it has in plenty, but it is without many mosquitoes or any of those horrid leeches which look like fine black threads waving about in the damp grass. In one's walks, it is quite easy to get one on one's person; it then quickly grows from a thread into the size of a man's thumb, and is most difficult to detach until it has completely gorged itself. A gold mine is so clean, and, excepting in the lowest galleries very dry. Immense growths of fungi sometimes hang from the roofs of the passages, like great stalactites of curious shape. The manager told us he had several times come upon frogs alive, but firmly embedded in stone, apparently without means of breathing, but they die directly they are brought up into fresh air; also that oranges found below whole, fall apart into divisions and shrivel up when brought to the surface. Logs of wood not wholly decayed, but which can be used for firewood, are met with, and over these strata containing sea-shells and ocean deposit, showing that not many ages ago Australia must have been under water.



Baku and the Oil Regions of the Caspian

WRITTEN BY E. A. BRAYLEY HODGETTS. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



BAKU, the centre and capital of the oil regions of the Caspian, is most easily approached from Batoum, the Caucasian port on the Black Sea, which Russia obtained from Turkey after the war of

1876-77. From

Batoum, whose name means, literally, the end of everything, there is a single line of railway across the Caucasus to the Caspian port of Baku. This railway is the principal means of communication between Northern Persia and Europe, but all goods travelling by it have to pay duty on entering Russia, as though they were imports. The railway line takes the traveller through a beautiful and

interesting country, with snow-capped mountains, primæval forests, ravines, and precipices. The costumes of the inhabitants are different from anything to be seen in any other part of the world. Fierce, bearded men, in flow-

ing capes of black sheepskin, with enormous fur caps, and armed to the teeth, ride about the country. They are nearly all robbers, and life is but little valued; yet every second man you meet is a prince. The women are of rare beauty.

Through this wild and romantic region the railway takes us at a snail's pace into a barren sandy desert, at whose end is the Persian town of Baku, and beyond it the Caspian Sea.

Baku is really divided into two distinct towns, the Black and the White. The White town is the ancient and original city. The Black is of recent growth, being the seat of the petroleum refineries and works, which have made the place what

it is; it is separated from the port by a large, arid, sandy plain, several miles in extent. A paternal government has the credit of founding it some twenty odd years ago, as a measure of public health and safety. Before that period



M. DESPOT-ZENOVITCH

the oil refineries were erected in Baku itself, and poisoned the air with their exhalations, besides being a constant source of danger from fire. To-day, a fire in the Black town is one of the most terrible sights imaginable, but the probability of its spreading to Baku itself is remote.

The traveller who arrives at Baku by railway will, at first, be struck by two very remarkable phenomena, one being

cumstance to astonish the traveller is that when he alights he will still find himself in a barren sand waste, and about four miles away from the town to which the railway proposed to take him. This is not peculiar to Baku, but may be said to be a feature of all Russian towns. The railway-station is always several miles from the town to which it is supposed to belong.

Taking a handsome equipage with



CITADEL OF BAKU

the invisibility of the town. The train takes him up a slight incline, on surmounting which he will observe a sandy desert with the Caspian Sea in the distance, but no trace of a town. The houses are indeed low, few having more than one story, and being made of the same general colour as the sandhills which obstruct the view from the railway, the town possesses few salient features to stand out against the sky and attract the gaze. The next curious cir-

two capital Arab horses—for all the cabs are excellent—the traveller will drive along an unmacadamised track into the town, which is composed of substantially-built houses, with wide streets, and plenty of open spaces. Baku has a population of about 120,000 inhabitants, of whom a large proportion are Persians, Tartars, Armenians, and Circassians, who all wear their national costumes; but it has only three hotels, which vie with each other in filth and



THE TOWER OF BAKU

untidiness. It may be said that the Métropole has the best accommodation—if there can be any comparison where all is vile—the Grand the best food, and the Europe the best wines. It is curious that a town, which is the principal industrial centre of the Caucasus, should have such miserable hostelry; but there is very little enterprise here, although there are tramways, a public park, and even a club.

Everything in Baku smells and tastes of petroleum, but the climate is healthy and bracing. Nothing will grow there. The soil is absolutely barren, and the park, which was planned and laid by the former Mayor, M. Despot-Zenovitch, a descendant of the ancient despots and Baku's greatest benefactor, has been made with earth imported from the interior. The paths are asphalt, and the trees poor and sickly.

Nevertheless, Baku is worth a visit. It is one of the ancient towns of the world. Strabo mentions it, so does Marco Polo, who speaks of the naphtha

industry, which was already in existence, and says that the oil of Baku found its way by camel caravans even to Bagdad.

All that is interesting and picturesque in Baku dates back to the days of Persian rule, although it was conquered by one of Peter the Great's generals, Matyoushkin, in 1722. But beyond developing its trade, Russia has not done much for the place.

Walking along the handsome quay, busy with ships, sailors, merchandise, and Persians, the traveller's attention will be arrested by an enormous forbidding black tower. He will, doubtless, mistake it for a water-tower, as I did. It is nothing of the kind. The story goes that in ancient days the Khan who ruled Baku fell in love with his own daughter, and desired to marry her. She at first refused, but finally promised to yield to his entreaties if he would have a tall tower erected on the sea-shore. The old Khan humoured this strange fancy, and day by day impatiently watched the progress of the

building. At last it was completed, and the maiden, arrayed in white, and faithful to her promise, mounted to the summit of the tower. Trembling with impatience and passion her father followed her. But when she got to the top, instead of submitting to his embraces, she threw herself into the sea. If this legend is true, the sea must have receded considerably since the tower was built. That this has been the

jewellery, and other merchandise. They crouch in their loathsome booths, and sleep in the same place in which they sell. At the northern gate of this Persian citadel is the great market, covering an area of about twelve acres. Here on market days the entire ground is covered with camels, all lying down quietly with their packs on their backs.

Not many miles from Baku is the celebrated temple of eternal fire, to



OIL CARTS

case is proved by the position to-day of the ancient Persian tower and fort, which stands upon a hill. The old wall is still intact, and the quaint Persian palaces, with their beautiful symmetrical architectural features, are in a perfect state of preservation.

Round this wall and fortress are the filthy, slimy Persian bazaars, which look like veritable dens of thieves. Here the wealthy merchants from Tabreez and Resht come to sell carpets, silver ware,

which the fire-worshippers annually make pilgrimage. The natural gases rising from the ground are conducted by means of pipes to the four little turrets, by which the temple is surmounted, and out of which it belches in fierce flames. The temple is in perfect preservation and taken care of by a venerable old soldier, who claims he is over a hundred years old. I was taken to this place by M. Despot-Zenovitch, to whom I have already referred. For-



SPOUTING FOUNTAINS

merly on the staff of the Grand Duke Michael, the Viceroy of the Caucasus, he was ordered to Baku to undertake the organisation of the municipality, and became its first Mayor. To him Baku owes its park, its fine broad streets and general European appearance, and many of its institutions, as for instance its water-supply, which is derived from the Caspian and made potable by means of condensers.

Of course, the wealth and prosperity of Baku is due entirely to its petroleum, which has been its main industry from time immemorial. Nevertheless, after Russia definitely annexed Baku, in 1806, the petroleum industry, which, although most primitively conducted, was a flourishing one under Persian rule, languished

and dwindled. The government administration alternated between developing the oil-wells itself and farming them out, the latter system giving the best results.

It was reserved for a German to give the first impetus to the present petroleum trade. The Germans have ever been the pioneers of enterprise in Russia. In 1859 Baron Liebig, the eminent chemist, was invited to develop the petroleum industry of Baku, and sent over his assistant, a certain Moldenhauer, to erect the first works. He did not continue long in the place and was succeeded by another German, named Eichler. But notwithstanding his

efforts, and the efforts of those who followed him, Russian petroleum could make no headway against American competition even in Russia itself, until, on the recommendation of a government commission the excise on petroleum was abolished, only to be reintroduced in later years by M. Vishnegradski, the late Minister of Finance. It was not until the arrival of the energetic Swedes, the Brothers Nobel, that the Baku petroleum industry was really placed on its present basis. That was in 1875. In the meantime, the ruinous competition between small owners led a Russian authority, Mr. Palibin, to say that the laws of political economy could not be applied to the Caucasus. Everywhere else, he said, competition improved and

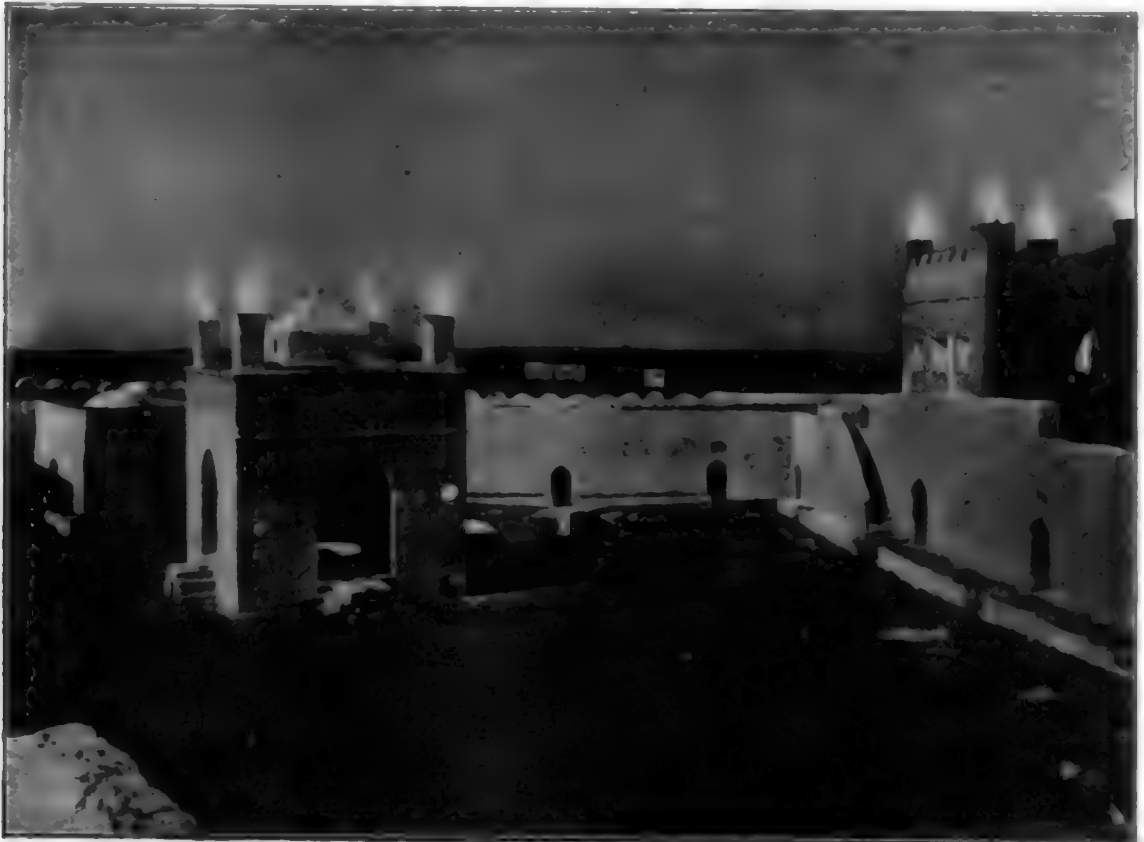
cheapened goods, but here the opposite effect was produced. The small owners have indeed been the curse of the petroleum industry; they are suspicious of each other and of all improvements, besides being dishonest, and yet they have been fostered by the government, who has consistently protected them from being swallowed up by large syndicates, such as those of Nobel Brothers and of the Rothschilds. It is due to their persistent opposition that there is still no pipe for the transmission of petroleum from Baku to Batoum, and that the oil has to be transported by rail or steamer. Even the substitution of tank carriages and tank steamers for the old-fashioned casks, which were carried in Persian carts constructed precisely as they had been a thousand years ago, with the axle fixed in the wheel and revolving itself instead of the wheel revolving round it, cost the Nobels no end of time and trouble.

For all that, and notwithstanding the primitive methods still in use in the oil refineries, the ruinous competition and the difficulties of transport, the petro-

leum trade of Baku is assuming very respectable dimensions. Whereas in 1877 the total production did not exceed 167,411,576 lbs., the latest returns give an output of 10,000,000,000.

One of the most beautiful sights imaginable is a spouting oil-well. Every now and again some lucky speculator succeeds in striking a fountain, which will vomit forth heavy dark masses of naphtha to an enormous height at an estimated rate of 36,000 lbs. a day. Such a fountain floods the neighbourhood. There are great lakes of petroleum extending for miles in the vicinity of the oil-wells. These are not inflammable, for they contain large proportions of water, but they have a most overpowering effect on the imagination.

Many of these oil-wells are in the hands of uneducated Tartars, whose idea of trade is to cheat, and who have little enterprise and less intelligence. With the spread of education and enlightenment the present benighted state of the petroleum industry of Baku will be altered, and then we may expect great things of the Caucasus.



TEMPLE OF ETERNAL FIRE

About Gas Works and Other Things

A REMARKABLE RECORD OF PROGRESS

WRITTEN BY ALEXIS KRAUSSE. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

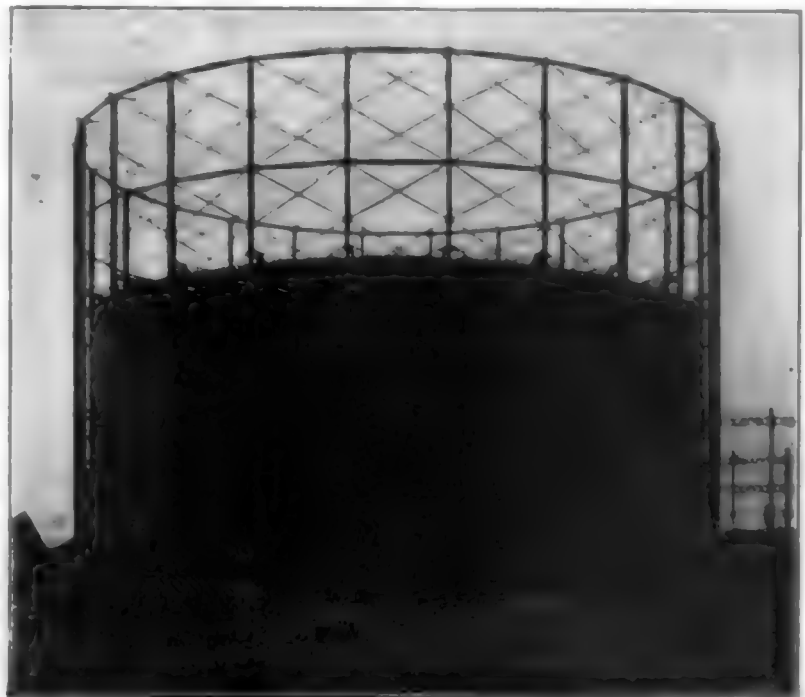


THE gas supply of London is in the hands of three great companies of varying proportions, each of which administers more or less adequately to its allotted district. These companies are, in the order of the territory they supply, the Gas Light and Coke Company, the South Metropolitan Gas Company, and the Commercial Union Gas Company. The methods by which each makes its gas, and transmits it to the consumer, are very similar, varying only in minor detail and in quantity, and to inspect the works of the one is to understand the *modus operandi* of all.

In several respects the South Metropolitan Gas Company stands out in bold relief from its rivals, inasmuch as it presents characteristics, not to say startling anomalies, such as exist in no other corporation, and it is for this reason that the great institution across the river has been selected for special description by the writer.

The South Metropolitan Gas Company lights the whole of London on the south of

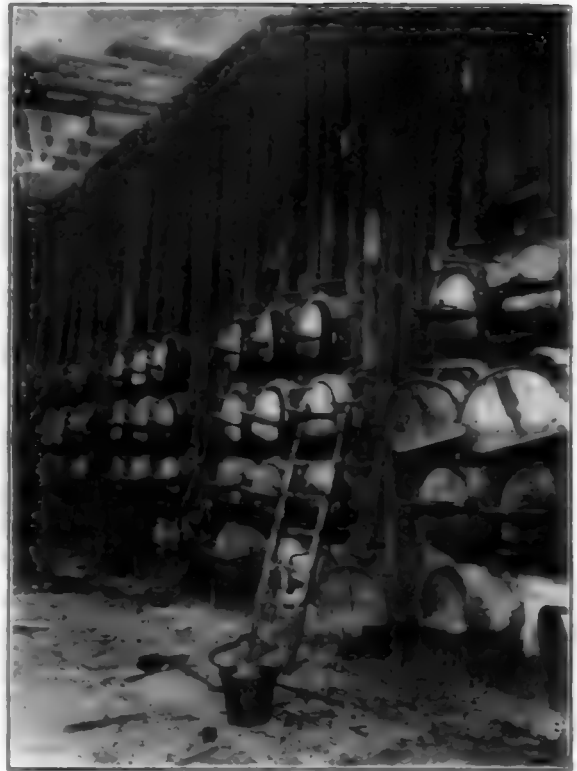
the Thames. Its domain extends from Richmond to Plumstead, and from the river to the Crystal Palace. It employs nearly four thousand hands, carbonises from one thousand to twelve hundred tons of coal, and makes, on an average, forty-five million cubic feet of gas every day. Its gas-holders possess a capacity of nearly fifty million cubic feet of gas, and it has about one hundred and fifty thousand customers on its books. Before advertizing to the curious circumstance under which these remarkable figures are attained, it is advisable to take a walk round the works of the Company, and to make a



THE GREAT GAS-HOLDER

casual inspection of the means employed for lighting its extensive district.

The policy of the South Metropolitan Gas Company has always been one of progress, and among the most pronounced factors of its rule has been the tendency towards decentralisation. It has at present no fewer than six stations where gas is made and stored. The most important of these is known as the distributing station, whence all the important mains radiate, and which is in direct communication with each of the outlying works. This distributing station, which is also the site of the Company's offices, is known as 709A, Old Kent Road, the place consisting of some 40 acres, along the margin of which flows the Surrey Canal, giving direct access to the Thames. The entrance is at a corner of the Old Kent Road, midway between the Elephant and Castle and Deptford, and it is here that the principal works of the Company are situated. The outlying works are at Vauxhall, Bankside, Rotherhithe, Deptford Creek, and East Greenwich, the last-named being notable for the fact that it contains a gas-holder capable of holding twelve million cubic feet of gas. This monster gas-holder is without question the biggest in the world. It is what is known as a six-lift holder, being made in six sections, each telescoping into the other, and its diameter is 300 feet. The brobdignagian structure



INTERIOR OF RETORT HOUSE

supplies a well-known landmark for miles around. The cost of constructing this gas-holder was £72,000.

The raw material from which gas is made is coal, and this is used by the South Metropolitan Company in quantities which are staggering in their immensity. Some three hundred thou-



RANGE AND RETORT HOUSES

sand tons are turned into gas and its by-products every year, the bulk of these passing through the works in the Old Kent Road. They come direct from the North to the Thames, and thence they are conveyed in barges via the canal alongside the retort houses, where they are carbonised. There are a number of these ranged along the canal bank for convenience in handling the coal as it arrives, and they are constructed on two principles. Some of them are worked by furnaces, each controlled by its gang of attendant stokers; but the Company are gradually introducing an entirely new method of working its retort houses, and several are already completed. The new principle of construction does away with the range of furnaces, as usually found in gas works, and substitutes a range of furnaces worked by a blast from a stoke-hole constructed outside. This method entails a marked saving in fuel, ensures a regular heat, and keeps the interior of the house at a lower temperature than under the old system, as well as economising labour.

The interior of the retort houses are comparatively dark. The buildings are of fine proportions and exceedingly lofty, and the many retorts which pass up towards the roof from the range of furnaces give a characteristic appearance to the whole, which is heightened by the spectacle of the many semi-nude figures of herculean stokers, each intent on the many attentions his particular section of retorts requires. As the gas chambers become exhausted, the doors are opened, the coke is removed and the apparatus recharged; this process being gone through at regular intervals. As the crude gas is extracted from the coal by the action of the furnace, it finds its way from the retorts through a series of hydraulic mains filled with perforated plates kept covered by ammoniacal liquor, which frees it from some of its impurities; after which it traverses a range of condensers to cool. The gas is next washed in order to free it from tar and sulphuretted hydrogen, scrubbed to expel its ammonia, and finally purified prior to being passed into the gas-holders, whence it finds its way into the mains. It sounds somewhat grotesque

to speak of washing and scrubbing gas, but both processes are highly necessary in order to insure the product being absolutely pure. The distinction between the two methods of treatment are that in the washer the gas goes through the liquor, while in the scrubber the liquor goes through the gas.

The gas-holders at the distributing dépôt of the South Metropolitan Gas Company, although not to be compared with the huge structure at East Greenwich, are monsters in their way, the larger one being capable of holding five million cubic feet of gas. The outward form of these monsters is well known to all Londoners, but their interior aspect is probably a mystery to most.

I have already stated that the South Metropolitan Gas Company presents certain curious characteristics, which are to be found in no other gas corporation. These peculiarities are so remarkable as to be well worthy a special notice, and I detail them from the standpoint of the disinterested outsider who has neither interest nor sympathies with either the board or its employés.

It will doubtless be in the recollection of most of my readers that this Company suffered from a great strike among its hands in the winter of 1889-1890, and that the struggle, while it lasted, was marked by an extreme determination on the part of the board not to be dictated to by the men's Union. The struggle in question was not one which was brought about by any marked dissatisfaction among the hands, but was purely an academic battle. The South Metropolitan Gas Company had always expressed a dislike to Trades-Unionism, and had averred that the men's condition was in no way improved by the interference of these bodies. The Gas Workers' Union in 1887 decided to have a trial of strength with the Company, with the result that the Union got worsted on every hand, and finally became hopelessly beaten. So much is ancient history.

But the present condition of affairs is at the same time a startling confutation of the charges so often brought against capital, and a disproof of the claims of the unionist, inasmuch as the hands at the Company's works are to-day drawing



BATTLE GROUND OF THE GREAT STRIKE

a higher wage than those of any other gas company. This condition of things has been brought about by the operation of the profit-sharing scheme introduced by Mr. George Livesey, the chairman of the Company, whose administration of its principles has been largely aided by his brother Mr. Frank Livesey, the Company's engineer. The principle followed is, briefly, that every man in the employ of the Company—and the men number nearly 4,000—receives a bonus of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on his earnings over and above his regular wage, on condition that the recipient invests one-half the amount of the bonus he receives in the stock of the Company. The bonus of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is the present proportion paid, but this may well be increased, for the profit-sharing system is based on what is known as a sliding scale, and the lower the price of gas fees, the higher the rate of bonus becomes, the scale being an extra $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for every penny reduced in the price of gas. It therefore becomes to the interest of every employé of the Company to do all in his power to work his best, and to make the most gas at the

least expenditure, in the hope of enabling the board to lower the price of gas, and so thoroughly are the men in accord with this principle that they frequently point out how details can be worked at decreased cost in the hope of effecting a saving and a consequent reduction in working expenses. The bonuses are paid at Midsummer, and it is interesting to note that of the three thousand and odd hands employed, over three thousand are stock-holders in the Company. The average wage drawn by the men working for the South Metropolitan Gas Company is £2 per week, equal to approximately £100 per annum. And the bonus accruing to this wage is £7 10s., of which £3 5s. is paid in cash to the worker, while an equal amount is invested in his name in the Company's stock. But the interest in this new departure, made by a master mind in organisation, does not end here. It is curious, and from a purely financial point of view startling, to find that while the South Metropolitan Gas Company pays its workers more than other companies, its shareholders do not suffer, and that its dividends are prac-

tically identical with those of the Gas Light and Coke Company, an undertaking which has always been run on principles bound by red tape and aimed at dividends. But while this remarkable corporation pays more and earns as much as its competitors, it actually sells its produce cheaper, and the proof of the competence of the management of this undertaking is nowhere thrown into greater contrast to the penny-wise-and-pound-foolish policy of other gas works than in the price it charges for its gas.

Throughout the north of London, where the Gas Light and Coke Company have the monopoly, the price of gas is 2s. 10d. per thousand cubic feet. Across the river the South Metropolitan Gas Company supplies its customers with gas, possessing the same illuminating power, at 2s. 3d. per thousand, and this immense saving, amounting to 20 per cent. on the gross price, is effected not by juggling with figures, but by ability in management. The great Company in North London buy dear and sell dear, while its southern neighbour reverses

this policy. Official statistics which I have inspected show that the average cost of coal bought by the Gas Light and Coke Company averaged last year 10s. 11½d. the ton. That purchased by the South Metropolitan averaged 10s. 2½d. It is not necessary to go further in the comparison. It is only to be regretted that the residents north of the Thames have to go on paying the price.

In its go-ahead policy the Southern Company has effected many things which its fellows would never have dreamed of. Among others, it introduced the vastly popular penny-in-the-slot meter, which it encourages in every way, while the Gas Light and Coke Company supplies it grudgingly, and stifles its general use as far as it possibly can. The South Metropolitan Company has at the present moment over 60,000 penny-in-the-slot meters in use among its customers.

Turning from these points to one other, it appears that the net cost of carbonising a ton of coal at the works of the Gas Light and Coke Company is 3s. 4½d. over and above the cost of the



CANAL FRONT

coal. The cost of the same process in South London is 2s. 7d. We have therefore a Company which buys cheaper, pays higher wages, sells equally good gas at a lower price, and pays high dividends, achievements which can be arrived at only by exceptional capacity

backed by industry, ability and enthusiasm. That these qualities are at the service of the South Metropolitan Gas Company is evident to all who have had an opportunity of judging the work accomplished by the brothers George and Frank Livesey.



INTERIOR OF A PURIFYING HOUSE

Joe and Jim ;

OR

"Cherchez la Femme!"

WRITTEN BY VICTOR HEWITT. ILLUSTRATED BY T. LEY PETHYBRIDGE



THEY had been partners now for years, had Joe and Jim, out in the Californian goldfields. They had met on the way thither, had travelled together, and their hut had been one of the first erected by the banks of the creek. Together they had watched the place grow into quite an important village of wooden houses. They had seen men come on the search for the precious metal; they had seen men—luckier than themselves—go away with their fortunes made. They had seen the pistols whipped out almost daily in drunken squabbles, in the days when the village was as yet unformed, when each man knew that "kill or be killed" was oftener than not the rule for arbitration in disputes, and that he shot best who shot first. They had seen old men drop away and die under the toil they could no longer stand up to. They had seen laughing, hopeful lads done to death in a trice for no worse offence than a few words mockingly spoken; while perhaps, far away, a grey-haired woman was kneeling in a mother's prayer that God would deliver her boy from all evil, and let her see him once more—just *once!*—before she died; or a fair sister or sweetheart sat at the open window in the twilight, trying, through her tears, to count the days since *he* sailed, and wondering—wondering how he was getting on. For there is no man living upon this earth so base and so degraded that he is not all-in-all to *somebody*.

And a short time ago they had passed an evening over the grog and pipes with

a man whose claim had adjoined theirs—"Piggie" they called him, for no one knew his other name. "Piggie" was reputed to have been a "gent—a *real* swell" before he came out west, for his talk was different to most men's, and his hands were smaller, and, in resting-time, whiter. "Piggie" had made his little pile, and was off home the next day with it; he had a mother in England somewhere, living on nothing-a-week and the parish, and "Piggie" was determined to stop this. But at day-break, when Joe and Jim went down to the creek as usual, they found "Piggie's" body floating there, with staring, half-open eyes, and a knife-thrust between the shoulder-blades, just in the middle. They buried him silently by the creek.

"Pity!" commented Jim.

"I guess," agreed Joe.

Which little incident had the effect of making them guard their own little hoard more carefully, and keep their six-shooters in better and brighter condition.

Now the time had almost come for Jim and Joe to leave the diggings. They had worked day in, day out, for six years come summer; they had had a fair share of luck. They had risen together at dawn, toiled all day side by side, shared their evening meal, liquored up silently over their pipes, turned in together, and risen again at dawn, with little variation for six years. They seldom spoke, never conversed; but Joe regarded Jim as a right hand, while Jim had come to look upon Joe as a necessary of life. Over the grog they hastily mentioned the question of returning together; in fact, it was only

after three hours' tacit and smokeful deliberation, and ten minutes' earnest discussion, that they decided to hang on for another year.

"Thet'll see us, anyhow," said Joe.

"I reckon," replied Jim.

And so it was agreed.

But

The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley.

All would have been well, but for the

street of the village. Her name was simple "Nellie" to all intents and purposes. She was vain, coquettish (as far as her already waning charms permitted), empty-headed—but she was a woman. Her manner was coarse, her language coarser—but she was a woman. She had not one single sweet, womanly trait in her character—but *she was a woman!* And this commodity was valuable, in any shape or form, at the diggings, by reason of its scarceness,



"THE FIRST BARMAID OF THE LITTLE WOODEN Grog SHOP"

arrival in the village of—a woman. Nothing could have parted Jim and Joe for one moment except an explosion or—a woman. Men may hob and nob together for a lifetime; they may be brothers, and more than brothers; they may be each other's *alter ego* on the stage of life. Bring a woman into the scene—a worthless woman—and the devil has *his* little innings, and never fails to run up a big score.

She was a giggling, fair-haired, meretricious thing—the first "barmaid" of the little wooden grog-shop in the main

and men freely bartered their gold and their very selves in exchange, just as an African monarch gives away his priceless ivory for a string of worthless gaudy beads.

She was a woman, and it was this fact that struck the sleepy minds of Joe and Jim. Hitherto the customers of the reeking little canteen, with its bottles of coloured waters, and its flaring, stinking oil-jets had been attended to by men like themselves—bare-armed, grimy, perspiring. The two "pards" began to find a vague attraction in spending

their evenings there, and watching the gilded beauty flit about through the clouds of smoke. Jim would even leave his work in the middle of the day, and Joe would ponder earnestly as to where he could be—he used not to take so long over "banking" their little gains; while Joe would occasionally saunter out at odd times without even saying "Coming?" to Jim! All of which was getting very serious and unaccountable. But each man kept his secret, and talked less—and smoked more—than ever.

One evening—the first for many—they were passing in their own little den. It certainly *was* a rough night without, and the men *were*, as they confessed, "dog-tired"; but perhaps the real reason for their sudden domesticity was to be found in the fact that "Nellie" had left the diggings for a few days on a visit. The rum and water was soon mixed, the much-used clays lit, and Joe and Jim sat, as usual, gazing earnestly into the bright fire of wood.

"Did well to-day," suggested Joe, uneasily.

"All right," agreed Jim.

Half-an-hour's silent puffing. A man would not have required a thought-reader's powers to discover that each was eager to disburden himself of some deep secret that was obviously weighing him down. Joe, invariably the more garrulous of the two, spoke again.

"Nice gal, Nell!" he remarked, tentatively.

"I reckon," agreed Jim.

Puff—puff—puff!

"Ole Jim, I've somethin' to l'arn yew," said Joe, presently.

"Oh?" replied Jim.

Joe hesitated, for he was anxious to break the news gently. At last he spoke again.

"Ole Jim, I'm goin' to marry thet gal!"

The effort exhausted Joe, and he smoked more furiously than ever. So did Jim.

"Oh?" said the latter after a pause.

"Have yew axed her, ole Joe?"

"Not yet. Kissed her good-bye laas' night."

Jim looked up. "I, too, I reckon," he said, quietly.

Joe looked up. "Yew're a liar, ole Jim."

"I guess not," answered the other.

They replenished their glasses, and again gazed in the the fire.

"I've 'er fissogs here somewhere," said Jim, producing a photograph.

"Why, see here, too," replied Joe, extracting another from the folds of his grimy shirt.

The situation was one for earnest reflection—both men clearly realised that.

"I mean to get her—so, Jim!" said Joe, firmly. (He did not call him "*ole*" Jim this time.)

"I guess not. She's promised me, Joe," replied Jim, with equal firmness.

"So *yew*'ve bin sneakin' attar 'er, Jim?" asked Joe.

"No worsen yew," replied Jim, candidly.

"What d'yew mean, Jim?" asked Joe.

"What I says, Joe," answered Jim.

Another and a very serious pause.

"See here, Jim."

"Waal, Joe?"

"Yew want thet gal, I reckon?"

"I reckon."

"Waal, so do I—thet's right straight out."

"Then I guess we'd better settle it right away," said Jim.

"How, Jim?" asked Joe.

"Shooting-iron," suggested Jim, pleasantly.

"Righto!" replied Joe.

"Fust thing to-morrow, Grant's Coppice?" proposed Jim.

"See me nicely," acquiesced Joe.

"Thet's fixed up then—best man wins. Waal, good night, Joe."

"Good night, Jim."

"Grant's Coppice" was a clearing in the wood some little way from the village. It was, of course, surrounded by trees, whose boughs interlaced overhead; but it afforded a quiet, undisturbed "twenty paces" on occasions like this. It was called "Grant's Coppice" ever since the time when, three years ago, "Bully" Grant had been shot, in fair fight, clean through the neck by a boy he had cheated—a boy who scarcely knew the difference between a pistol and a curling-iron!

At dawn they rose as usual, and chanced to look into each other's eyes. The heated moments of last night were



"'I'VE 'ER FISSOGS HERE SOMEWHERE,' SAID JIM"

past now—each saw, in the other, only his old friend, his old "pard." It seemed odd that they did not shoulder their tools and set out to work as usual; the only burdens they carried to-day were their "Colts." The storm of the night had scarcely abated; the wind still blew in fitful gusts, and still the rain came down. Joe noticed, with some concern, that Jim searched for tobacco in his pouch and found none. Such a thing might, Joe reflected, put Jim at a disadvantage; he hastened to put the matter right.

"'Bacca, ole Jim?"

"Thenks, ole Joe."

So they commenced their last walk together. They were both dead shots. Neither would be likely to miss a coin at twenty yards, much less the sturdy breast that would soon be his target.

And on the way they reflected, as usual, each within his honest, slow mind.

"I could hit ole Jim, of course," Joe's thoughts ran; "I'd be a mug if I

couldn't! But he is sure to pot me too—safe as eggs. That's no good to either. Besides—he's my ole pard, is Joe—we've pigged in together now—how long is it?—six year! No—I reckon I'll not down ole Jim this time—'tain't worth it. He's a better man than me, is ole Jim, all the way. And I shouldn't care ter hang on alone if ole Jim was gone under, durn *me* if I should—not fer all the wimmin in the world."

"Joe or me—one or other—both, I reckon," reflected Jim, cheerily. "Poor ole Joe! It don't seem right, somehow, to stick an ounce of lead into him, after these times together, because he happens ter fancy a wench, same's me! S'pose he *did* miss me—or only wing me—which he won't? Well—durn it—I shouldn't know who ter talk ter without ole Joe in the cornder opposite, smokin' his pipe. No—I ain't goin' ter murder ole Joe—not just yet awile."

They reached the place. Joe held out his hand.

"Wa-al—so long, ole Jim."

"So long, ole Joe."

The hand-grip was a long one—the voices were not quite as stolid as usual. But Joe's eyes twinkled even now at the thought of the ingenious trick he was about to play on "ole Jim" by missing him; the corners of Jim's mouth twitched with merriment, as though he were conjuring up Joe's surprise presently at finding himself unhurt. But each felt, with the utmost certainty, that he had only a few seconds longer to live.

They took up their positions. Through the trees the wind whistled and snarled; the dripping of the rain on the foliage above them was the only sound. Joe particularly noticed an irritating, flapping leaf, almost over Jim's head; Jim remarked that a squirrel was playing about in the tree beneath which Joe stood.

"Say when, Jim," suggested the ever-garrulous Joe.

"No—yew," replied Jim.

Joe smiled broadly as he counted evenly—

"One—two—three—*fire!*"

The reports rang out. The squirrel dropped headless at Joe's feet; the leaf fluttered down on to the brim of Jim's hat.

The men gazed at each other for a few moments; then they gradually understood how things were. For once in a way, the two "pards" began to laugh outright. The laugh increased steadily in volume, and was prolonged for five minutes. It was, of course, the talkative Joe who began the conversation.

"Wa-al, ole Jim! We be durned fools, I guess, ole Jim."

"I reckon, ole Joe," agreed Jim.

They advanced to each other, and again laughed heartily. Then they shook hands again.

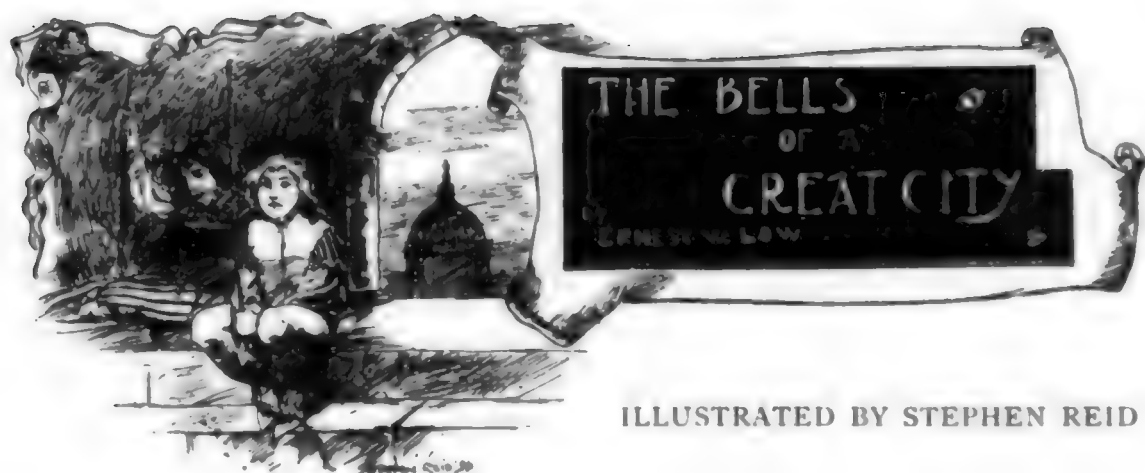
"Durn yew—ole Jim," said Joe, warmly.

"Durn yew too, ole Joe," replied Jim.

When last I heard of Joe and Jim, they were still together—and still unmarried.



"SAY WHEN, JIM!"



ILLUSTRATED BY STEPHEN REID.

THERE is something in the sound of bells which seems to appeal irresistibly to all sorts and conditions of men; the rich and the poor, the cultured and the ignorant alike come under the influence of its magic spell. The full appreciation of a performance upon a musical instrument demands a certain degree of musical education; the bells carry their own interpretation. And in their capacity for joy and sorrow, in variety of tone, ranging from the deep voice of a cathedral tenor to the modest tinkling of the treble in a parish church, and—factor more potent than all—in their associations, what instrument can be even compared with them?

Curiously enough, while some of our greatest poets have placed on record the feelings inspired in them by the sound of bells in the country, those in our great city have been passed by almost unnoticed. Surely the feelings they awaken if they differ in nature are no less powerful. From an historical and archæological point of view this lack of interest is also much to be deplored. It affords a striking contrast with the attitude of the people abroad; for instance in Antwerp they almost make a fetish of their magnificent "Carolus" and your guide watches you narrowly while you inspect the bell, as though he suspected you of designing to carry off the monster bodily! But to ask to inspect the peal of bells in a London church is to run the risk of being considered a mild sort of lunatic; on several occasions on proffering his request the

writer was met with the blankest of blank stares of incredulity and astonishment. Certainly we have little to rival or perhaps to compare with many of the specimens to be seen in the Netherlands, the birthplace of bell-ringing and bell-founding, but there is at the same time, within the boundaries of the "one square mile" ample material to repay the pilgrim for the time and trouble devoted to a thorough research.

Very little is known of the bells of St. Paul's until after the Great Fire. In the old Cathedral there were four large bells which hung in a clôchier or bell-tower at the eastern extremity of the churchyard. These did not, however, belong to the Cathedral proper, for they were in the Jesus Chapel which formed part of the parish church of St. Faith under St. Paul's. Here it was that the worthy traders of Ludgate and Paternoster Row used to hold their "folk-motes," being summoned by the sound of the bells. The tower was eventually demolished by Sir Miles Partridge, who is said to have won the bells from Henry VIII. by a throw of the dice. They were afterwards hung in the tower, and known as the "Jesus Bells." So much for Old St. Paul's. In an account of the Curiosities of the New Cathedral, written in 1759, there are many details about the bells. It says "You are likewise asked to see the Great Bell. . . and also a lesser bell. . . but the sound of both is so excessive loud, that tender ears are much affected if either happen to strike while near them." This "Great Bell," which is still used, is said to have

been first cast in the reign of Edward I. It was known as "Edward of Westminster," and then as "Westminster Tom," and used to hang at Westminster Hall, where its sonorous voice notified the hour to the judges. William III. presented it to the present Cathedral, and it was installed with great state in what has since been its home on New Year's Day, 1699. This is the bell upon which the hours are chimed, the "ting-tang" quarters being chimed upon it and two smaller bells arranged at the musical intervals of an octave and a fifth above. The hour bell weighs $5\frac{1}{2}$ tons and is 6 ft. $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. across the mouth. It is sounded by a large hammer on the outside of the bell, which is drawn up by a wire in connection with the clock, and allowed to fall by its own weight. The clapper, weighing 180 lbs., is only used on special occasions: on the death of a member of the Royal Family, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's and the Lord Mayor of London.

A well-known, though somewhat apocryphal anecdote relates to this bell. A soldier at Windsor, being found apparently asleep on his post at midnight, stoutly protested his innocence of such a breach of discipline, and declared that he was intently listening to the bell of St. Paul's, which much to his astonishment had struck 13! The officer in charge, thinking the story a curious one, caused enquiries to be made, with the result that Tommy Atkins' story was confirmed by several people. It is almost unnecessary to say that the clock has never again similarly misbehaved itself.

The peal of bells in the Cathedral are comparatively new, dating back only some twenty years. They are twelve in number, the tenor weighing 62 cwt. They are a fine peal, and are best heard at a distance, as the effect of such a mass of metal in vibration is not altogether pleasing at close quarters. Peals are rung at the usual church festivals, the ringers being members of that curious old Association—The Ancient Society of College Youths. The latest addition to the bells of the Cathedral took place in 1882, when Great Paul was raised in the tower. It is the largest bell in the

Metropolis, and weighs little short of 17 tons. It bears this inscription, "Vae mihi si non evangelisavero," and may be heard booming forth daily to apprise the busy workers in the vicinity that one o'clock has arrived. Indeed, it is often jocularly known in the neighbourhood as the "dinner-bell."

The precise origin of the saying "born within the sound of Bow Bells" is unknown, but the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow was certainly one of the oldest built by the Normans, if not a Roman temple, and the bells have been conspicuous almost as long as the building itself. A portion of the steeple fell down in 1271, and was not replaced until 1469, when the Common Council ordered the bell to be rung at nine o'clock in the evening. This was evidently a survival of the Curfew, and the signal for the busy traders in Cheapside to put up their shutters. Hence we have this rhyme from the gay 'prentices impatiently waiting to set forth on their evening frolics:—

*Clerke of the Bow Bell with the yellow locks
For thy late ringing thy head shall have
knocks.*

And the rejoinder of the browbeaten "clerke,"

*Children of Cheape, holde you all still,
For you shall have the Church Bell rung at
your will.*

The bells now in use were rung for the first time on the birthday of George III. in 1762. The most conspicuous feature of the church is the campanile or bell-tower, carried out by Wren in accordance with the plan of the builders of the ancient campanile which probably first arose in Byzantium. It is quite distinct from the main building, with which it is joined by a corridor; this arrangement brings out in strong relief its great height and the perfection of its proportions. It has been condemned as unsafe many times, and has been said positively to rock when the bells are in motion. As the same statement has been made of several of Wren's towers, which still hold their heads proudly aloft, it is not unsafe to predict that the tower of St. Mary-le-Bow will remain for many a long day to come.

The peal in St. Michael's, Cornhill, a



THE BELL RINGER

church ranking second to none for historical associations and architectural beauty, is chiefly remarkable for the story about the bell presented by Mr. Alderman Rus, which has been placed on record by that prince of chroniclers, Stow, who took an official interest in the affairs of the parish. The story appears in his 1603 edition, and is best related in his own words: "Upon St. James' night certain men in the loft next under the bells, ringing of a peal, a tempest of lightning and thunder arose and an ugly shapen sight appeared to them, going in at the south window and lighting on the north. For fear thereof they all fell down and lay as dead for the time, letting the bells ring and cease of their own accord. When the ringers came to themselves, they found certain stones of the north window to be raised and scrat as tho' so much butter printed with a Lyon's claws; the same stones were fastened there again and remain to this day. I have seen them often and have put a small stick or feather into them where the claws had entered, three or four inches deep." Master Stow evidently had little idea of the effects of lightning! The phenomenon was in his mind plainly to be attributed to the direct interposition of his Satanic Majesty! The whole of the bells were rehung in 1587, the "Rus Bell" being recast the next year. The minute of the vestry orders the rehunging of the bells in order that they may be "rong with much more ease" and is signed by Thomas Stow.

St. Giles, Cripplegate (famous as being the burial place of Milton and Foxe, of "Foxe's Book of Martyrs"), can boast of being the only place of worship in the City which, in addition to a fine peal, possesses a regular carillon. The chimes were made in 1795 by George Harman, of High Wycombe, a versatile gentleman who, though a cooper by trade, was evidently a skilful amateur mechanic. They play on a running peal of twelve bells the following tunes, one on each day of the week, commencing on Sunday, "Easter Hymn," "National Anthem," "Auld Lang Syne," "Hanover," "Hark 'tis the Bells," "Mariners' Hymn," and "Home Sweet Home." The machine

was repaired and altered in 1849, remained untouched until the Jubilee Year, when several necessary rectifications made it as good as new. The people of St. Giles always seem to have taken a great interest in their church and bells. Numerous entries concerning the latter are to be seen in the register, and some of them would sound rather strangely in our ears. Thus in 1680 it was ordered that "the third, sixth, and biggest bells be forthwith cast and made tuneable to *answer* the others." The activity displayed by the vestry at this time may perhaps have been due to the influence of the first Earl of Bridgwater, who lived at Bridgwater House in Barbican hard by.

In the turret of that historic place of worship, St. Bartholomew the Great, hang five bells, said to be the first five of a peal of twelve formerly hanging in the centre tower, which was pulled down in 1628. History is silent as to what became of the remainder. But if their fate is shrouded in mystery there is no doubt that the five which are left are of very ancient origin. They probably belonged to the Augustinian Canons, and bear a Foundry stamp ascribed to Thos. Bullesdon who died in 1510. They are all inscribed "Ora Pro Nobis," and each bears the name of its patron saint according to the usage of the Roman Church. The bells were only rehung upon the restoration of the Church in 1893, before which time, owing to their imperfect condition, their voices had been silent for many long years.

The largest church in the City is St. Sepulchre's, standing at the corner of Holborn and Giltspur Street, and almost facing Newgate, with which its bells have a sombre association. It was the practice for several centuries for one of the bells of St. Sepulchre to be tolled from 8 to 9 o'clock on the morning of an execution taking place at the prison opposite. In fact, a sum of money was bequeathed, the interest to be paid to the sexton for this purpose, but it was diverted by the Charity Commissioners a few years ago, together with the charities of the church.

No one can fail to regard the tall steeple of St. Bride's, Fleet Street, with

interest, issuing as it does from between the closely-packed adjacent buildings, and looking down upon the seething tide of humanity which night and day floods London's busiest thoroughfare. The steeple, which was finished in 1713, is a beautiful specimen of Wren's work, ranking only second to the tower of Bow church. It has a capital peal of twelve bells, the first peal of twelve in existence in London, and to celebrate the event, a famous peal was rung by the College Youths. But there are no regular ringers attached to the church, and consequently the bells are only heard on special occasions. Perhaps this is just as well, bearing in mind the curses showered some time ago upon the bells of another church not far off, whose resounding notes had a very disturbing effect upon the scores of brain-workers busily engaged in turning out "copy" in the vicinity.

Another Newspaper Street church which attracted a good deal of attention a few years ago, is St. Dunstan in the West. It used to have a clock with the dial overhanging the roadway, which was furnished with two figures of savages, who struck the quarters on suspended bells, gravely nodding their heads as they delivered the stroke. It possesses also a peal of eight bells, whose glories live in the past; the walls of the

tower bear many inscriptions relating the marvellous "Bob Majors," and other peals rung in bygone days, but at present the bells are not in ringing order.

I have not dealt in any way exhaustively with the bells of London City. To have attempted to do so within so short a compass would have been as futile as presumptuous. For, to deal comprehensively with the bells would entail giving a history of the churches themselves, and that in its turn would branch out into ever-widening spheres of research, indissolubly linked as they have been with the history of London, perhaps of England, during the last 800 years. My endeavour has been but to break ground upon the subject, with a faint hopefulness that those who cherish the relics of our country's past may be induced to visit some of these rapidly-disappearing landmarks ere they vanish into the "Ewigkeit." Some, alas, are already gone; others the advancing tide of utilitarian vandalism even now threatens to submerge. One by one the City churches and graveyards disappear; a few more years, and perhaps even the site of the resting-place of the author of "Paradise Lost" himself may be obscured and well nigh forgotten 'neath the overshadowing walls of one of the "Palaces of Commerce."



The Holy Carpet



ONE imposing Oriental spectacle few ordinary tourists are privileged to witness, occurring as it does in the early summer, is the departure from Cairo of the Holy Carpet, which is destined to cover the Tomb of Mahomet at Mecca, and is taken there by a huge convoy of pilgrims. The idea originated over six centuries back, when one of the Ayub Caliph's wives, Fatima, rode over the weary stretches of desert that lie between Cairo and the Prophet's resting-place in a gorgeous litter, carrying an embroidered Kisweh, or Carpet, wherewith to adorn his shrine. Though she only made the trip once (and quite enough, too, as any one who has tried

the experiment will admit), the pilgrims continue the litter and carpet, bringing back the old kisweh in exchange for each new one, to benefit by the sanctity which it had absorbed during the past twelvemonth.

For five hundred years—except when hindered by war, or the Wahabee brigands beyond the Red Sea—the horde of hadjis has set out from the Egyptian capital to march wearily round by Suez and Sinai, and so to their goal, suffering intensely from heat and thirst when the cycle of years brought round the month of Shawwal to the summer solstice, and perishing from no less cruel cold when it occurred in the winter months. Nevertheless, their numbers never lessened;



DEPARTURE FROM CAIRO OF THE HOLY CARPET



PROCESSION OF PILGRIMS WITH CARPET

the various religious foundations, among whom is divided the duty of furnishing a section of the carpet, and of the Mahmal (or structure in which it is carried), vied with each other in enriching and embellishing the gorgeous embroidery; and the various caliphs and viceroys no more thought of failing to start the caravan off with royal honours, than would the Emperor of China of omitting to plough his rood of ground each spring. Ismail Pasha used to spend as much as £50,000 on the ceremony, it is said; and, judging by the descriptions given by many writers, the spectacle was unrivalled in respect of Oriental magnificence. Paul Lenoir tells of the vast crowds that assembled around the Citadel to watch the parade of ulema, and dervishes, and soldiers; the throng of pilgrims; the deafening noise created by the musicians; the endless procession of gilded court carriages, followed by camels hidden in cloth of gold, curvetting Arab steeds, and, finally, the white dromedary, almost invisible beneath its rare burden, the Mahmal. "This magnificent animal, completely covered with gold brocade, advanced slowly and painfully under the weight of the enormous catafalque which swung from side to side upon his back. This catafalque, arranged in tent

form, was surmounted by a sparkling jewelled crescent, and hung round with little golden bells; the whole of the canopy glittered with gold embroidery and precious stones, beneath which the material, which was green silk, had utterly disappeared. Over the top of the dome of this ambulatory tent, and of the four small pavilions, floated black horse-tails, surmounted by finely-wrought crescents. The dromedary's head was laden with ostrich plumes, tied up with silken rosettes and wonderful embroideries. The other portions of the adornment matched the general colour of the catafalque, which, being entirely green and gold, produced a dazzling effect in the distance." Under the feet of this privileged animal the crowd were wont to fling themselves fanatically, as being even more meritorious than touching the filthy naked santon who headed the line of march, and who, by the way, died lately full of honour. If the scene lacked the ethnological interest of the rival caravan from Damascus, which comprised wanderers from the Black, the Caspian, and the Arab seas, from Caucasus, the region of the Oxus, even the remote steppes of Samarcand, it could boast of nearly every portion of Northern Africa, from Timbuctoo to Lake Chad, fully as wild



VIEW OF THE HOLY CARPET



THE PROCESSION THROUGH THE DESERT

of aspect, and fanatical in spirit. But those days are of the past. The control of Egypt by English authority and European financiers has caused the glory of the Mahmal to depart. Last year, as in 1882, there were no Egyptian soldiers, comparatively speaking, to form its imposing guard of honour, though in Arabi's year our Christian troops filled the anomalous rôle. The Mahmal, though still richly and beautifully worked by the company of broderers who are engaged upon it all the year round, no longer looks like the contents of Streeter's window thrown over a ten-foot tent. The viceroy of the Caliph, the Khedive, never troubles about saluting it, or even seeing it, on its departure or return, but sends instead his Minister of Finance, who always looks bored. The pilgrims are taken to Jeddah at so much a hundred, dead or

alive, and make the journey so quickly and comfortably that green turbans are as common as flies in Cairo. The naked Dervish is suppressed, and the few Giaours who care to look at the show may smoke a pipe, nowadays, without fear of being mobbed, and perhaps killed.

The accompanying illustrations give a fair idea of the various phases of the festivity, or penance, or whatever it may be called; of the elaborate decoration of the splendid fabric; the superb supercilious brute which bears it; the appearance of the city as it parades through the various streets; and the final long dusty journey through the desert, between hillocks which were busy towns ere Mahomet or Mahmal were created, headed by the company of Bashi-bazuks, who are to be the pilgrims' guardians and police.

